

BAPTIST HERALD

OCTOBER 1990



GROW GRATITUDE

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude."

Colossians 2:6-7



How Do We Measure Our Gratitude Towards God?

"I've been healed," shouted the leper. "Thanks and praise be to God." These may have been the sentiments heard on the day that Jesus healed ten leprosy men as recorded in Luke 17:11-19. In this passage of Scripture, we read of only one of the ten healed men who "counts his many blessings" and returns to give "thanks" to Jesus.

It is clear that this one man overflowed with gratitude (Colossians 2:7) for having received God's generous gift of wholeness and healing.

This man's attitude illustrates his "growth in gratitude." His willingness to worship God by returning to Jesus to give heartfelt thanks is evidence of his gratitude.

One way to measure our gratitude is by our financial giving as a response for the blessings God has so generously given to us.

In order to continue the ministry of the North American Baptist Conference at home and overseas, we need to continue to "grow in gratitude" until there is an "overflow."

As a Conference of local churches, we have committed ourselves to an aggressive evangelistic church planting program. People are being reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Canada, the United States, and on five overseas mission fields.

Your "growth" gift toward the Celebration of Gratitude Offering goal of \$400,000 will overflow to meet the many needs which are evident in our world. Please assist in fulfilling our North American Baptist Conference mission and ministry goals by making a sacrificial gift that measures your growth in gratitude for what God has done for you personally.

Together, let us grow in gratitude to the glory of God! □

Celebration of Gratitude 1990 Offering Goal \$400,000

☐ **Yes**, I do acknowledge God's many gifts to me. I am blessed beyond all measure. I want to definitely express my gratitude by giving the following gift:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ other \$ _____

Please direct my gift to the following:

☐ Church Planting Project ☐ World Missions
☐ Theological Education in North America ☐ Where Most Needed

☐ I am also supporting our total Conference ministries in prayer.

☐ I am committing myself to grow to God's glory.

Name _____

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Church name/City _____

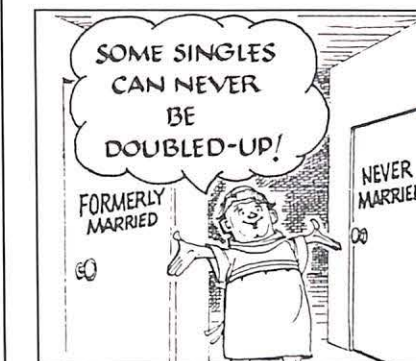
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Praying in the Wilderness

by Stephen Brachlow

The glorious, golden days of October are upon us, when oaks and maples blaze with color, and blue skies soar high in the clear, crisp air of autumn's splendor. These are days of wonder. Days of enchantment. Days of those last long walks in the warm sunshine of Indian Summer. And so they are also days of high praise, days when the words of the Psalmist leap so easily from the heart: "The heavens are telling the glory of God; the firmament proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2).

Nature has often been a place for prayer, a place where God awakens our senses and calls to us through the wonder and deep mystery of creation itself. Not that trees, lakes, or mountain peaks are themselves,

in some pantheistic sense, God. Rather, they are more like faithful messengers of God.

Although the wind that bends the trees and tousles the hair is not God, we may yet recognize God in just such an experience because, as the Psalmist writes, the One "who makest the clouds thy chariot . . . ridest on the wings of the wind" and "makest the winds thy messengers" (Psalm 104:3-4).

This was something of the experience of God that Jonathan Edwards, the great eighteenth-century American theologian of Puritan New England, found so moving in his own life. As part of his daily regimen of prayer and meditation, Edwards would often take long, contemplative walks in

the woods that surrounded his home in Northampton, Massachusetts. Writing in 1739, Edwards described the impact of these walks:

God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in everything; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the meantime, singing forth, with a low voice my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer.

Edward's description of his

experience in nature, of praying in the wooded Massachusetts wilderness, is suggestive of a rich Biblical theme that revolves around the concept of "wilderness" in Scripture. It is a prominent theme that is most often associated with the exodus experience of the people of Israel in the Sinai desert.

In the Bible, the wilderness is often depicted as a place of prayer. It is also described as a place of testing and temptation, as much as a place for spiritual consolation and protection. So we are told in Revelation 12:6, that the woman fled from the dragon "into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished."

The spirituality of the wilderness motif in Scripture is perhaps best summed up in the classic statement of Hosea 2:14, in which God says to the people of Israel: "I will lead her into the wilderness and there speak tenderly to her heart." There, in the wilderness, the people of God would experience in a profound way a sense of divine transcendence in their midst.

It is this longing to meet God in the wilderness that has drawn me away from my desk at the Seminary each January to be off for a week with a group of students, new every year, to those beautiful snow-covered mountains to the west of us in the Black Hills of South Dakota. There, in the wilderness, we spend a week together, much of it in silence, fasting, and in prayer, as Christ Himself often did when he went into the Judean desert. In the great silence of the Hills at midwinter, it seems that one is able in a fresh way to hear God speak His Word into our lives, as in the wilderness, God spoke to Moses, to Elijah, to the Apostle Paul, and to so many others.

Even John Calvin, that sixteenth-century, black-robed Reformer of Geneva, who is rarely remembered for possessing any lyrical qualities, found his heart strangely turned while contemplating the cosmos.



"Wherever you turn your eyes," he wrote, "there is no place in the universe in which you cannot discern at least some traces of God's glory. You cannot at one glance survey this most spacious and beautiful system in all its vast extent, without being completely overwhelmed by its infinite brilliance." Nature provides us with what Calvin called "a mirror in which to contemplate the otherwise invisible God."

But one of the great mysteries in the Biblical theme of the wilderness is that nature is not simply an object to contemplate. It speaks. It says something to us. As Psalm 19:3 indicates, "there is no speech, nor are there words . . . yet their voice goes out through all the earth." The people of Israel captured the truth of this in the Hebrew word they used in the Old Testament for "wilderness": midbar, which is comprised of two Hebrew words

that together literally mean "to speak." For the people of Israel, the wilderness was not a place of dumb silence. Rather, it spoke a language of the Spirit, the grammar and syntax of which the mind may not entirely grasp, but the heart intuitively understands.

There is something about being alone, out-of-doors. To feel on the cheek a warm breeze in high summer, to experience the depth of a clear-blue winter sky high over a fresh blanket of snow, or to stand motionless on an open prairie and listen intently to wild bird-song and country sounds is to catch, however faintly, a whisper from the One who, in creative silence, as Gerard Manley Hopkins put it, "broods with warm breast" over the face of earth. C.S. Lewis once said about just such an experience, "It is a message. We know we are being touched by a finger of the right hand at which there are pleasures for evermore."

This is the wilderness path of the prayerful life. It is perhaps a path we need to walk more often, and more faithfully, especially in these golden October days, with attentive hearts and high expectations of a visitation from the One who "makest the wind thy messengers." It is a simple path, filled with uncommon joys and quiet pleasures that may soothe our weary, time-pressed lives and bring a wonderfully renewed awareness of the loving presence of Christ's Spirit. The Russian novelist, Dostoevsky, expressed it so simply in **The Brothers Karamazov**:

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day. □

Dr. Stephen Brachlow is Professor of Church History and Christian Spirituality at North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD.

Out of Here—or—into Here?

by Ronald E. Mayforth

"**O**ut of here — no more teachers, books, exams — free at last!" These words jumped out at me in the parking lot of a high school. We were on our way to celebrate a niece's graduation. Several graduates celebrated by painting this kind of message in psychedelic colors all over their cars.

Most of us can remember similar feelings when we finished some long climb through an educational process. Nevertheless, we hope the "graduate painters" also gleaned from their education that learning is a lifelong pursuit necessary not only for success but also probably survival. We need to be lifelong students

- to keep our minds active...develop our potential;
- to prevent boredom for ourselves or associates;
- to keep pace with the rapid changes in society, our families, and vocations;
- to be able to be an actor, not just a reactor;
- to be part of the solution, not just more of the problem; part of the production, not just part of consumption;
- to know ourselves, our times;
- to adequately live in the present and plan for the future.

While study is crucial for every person, it is even more so for the Christian who is called to be a disciple and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). A disciple of Christ is one who intentionally tries to "learn Christ"—His provisions, philosophy, principles, purposes, programs, and person. To do this, one must become a lifelong student of



the Bible. We also need to study the Bible for other high and holy purposes:

- To know God, be loved by Him, and love Him back. David Hubbard says that the Bible is like a marriage manual describing how we can have a beautiful relationship with the one we love. All friendships require talking, listening, and understanding by both parties.
- To let our minds be renewed. God renews our whole lives by renewing our thoughts, self-talk, memories, conscience, attitudes, values, and feelings. He knows that our lives are dyed the color of our habitual thoughts.
- To prepare us to be equipped for effective service in His kingdom (II Timothy 3:16-17). The kingdom of God needs more of its members who thoroughly think, feel, and act "Christian." We need to be ready to give a clear and convincing account of our faith walk with Christ.
- To protect us from the pollutions and seductions of the world, flesh, devil (Psalm 119:11).

How do you study the Bible, when, and where? What works for you? What frustrates you? Allow me to share a few insights on Bible study that I have gleaned from

reading, listening, trial, and error. Some time along the trail, maybe I can benefit from your growth in discipleship.

1) Get some basic tools. Study of the Bible is often like searching for gold. Some you can get in a stream with a pan. Most, however, is found deep in the earth and requires powerful hammers, dynamite, crushers, and supports. Consider purchasing some good mining tools like:

- a Bible such as the **New King James**, the **New Revised Standard Version**, or the **New International Version**. The **Thompson Chain Study Bible** or **Zondervan's NIV Study Bible** are helpful. Get a Bible which has paper and margins with room for writing.
- a Bible study handbook like **Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible**.
- a one-volume commentary of the Bible.
- a Bible concordance like **Young's Analytical Concordance**.
- a Bible atlas.
- a Bible dictionary.
- surveys of the Old and New Testament.
- a notebook or journal, which you can use for collection, reflection, research, and communion.

Consider buying one volume a year as a Christmas present for your family, yourself, and your relationship with God. Help the family members learn how to use the tools. You will enjoy growing together. You will get on with discipling those closest to you and yourself. You will develop a strong faith resource center in your home. Your pastor or Conference worker would be delighted to guide you in the purchase and use of such tools.

2) Set a time. Some argue that it is legalistic to have a set time for

Bible study, meditation, and prayer. Building relationships requires regular contact. If anything is going to have an impact on our lives, it must be regular. While we can commune with God all day long, we need some private, focused time with Him when we are alert and alone. This time is not exclusive or absolute, but it is intentional.

3) Develop a place. To be sure, we can experience God in a myriad of places: nature, home, church, work, or a busy city. However, many Christians have found it helpful to develop a special place where they try to have daily fellowship with God. This place should be comfortable, quiet, and uncluttered. It might include prayer reminders, worship symbols, and study resources.

4) Develop a basic plan of study. At times, we eat with our fingers or chop sticks, but most of the time we eat at regular times with knife, fork, and spoon. It is good to experiment with various ways of meeting God in His Word. Usually, we find one or two which fit us best. See a book like **Twelve Dynamic Bible Study Methods**, Richard Warren (Victor Books). With whatever plans you develop, consider several constants:

Overview. Develop a flexible Bible study plan that includes all the books of the Bible, including those which are currently being taught publicly in your church. Speed is not the issue. Breadth, understanding, application, and communion are the issues.

Preview. Before you dive into a book of the Bible, explore some preliminaries like:

Who wrote this? From where? To whom? To where? Who is actually speaking? What is the original purpose of this writing? What was going on in the people of God, in the life of the author, in history, in the culture? What is the style of this writing and how does this affect the meaning, law, history, prophecy, poetry, theology? What is the basic outline of this book? Why is this in the Bible?

Bifocal view. When studying a chapter, paragraph, or verse, consider trying one of the following methods:

• The Inductive Bible Study Method

Observation. What does it say?

Interpretation. What does it mean to them, to us, to me?

Application. How do I respond to God in my thinking, feeling, deciding, and acting? Faith application leads to soul confirmation (John 7:17).

• Charlie Shedd's Bible Study Method

As one reads, he/she puts symbols in the margin for further reflection, study, discussion with another, or prayer.

Light bulb = a new or fresh insight.

? = a problem or question which needs exploration. We need to try to gain understanding of ideas, people, and places which are unclear to us.

→ = the area where God is calling most clearly to me to decide, act, change, or be changed.

• Dr. Bob Cook's Bible Study Method (adapted by Ron Mayforth)

Read a passage until God speaks to you.

Reflect. What does this say, mean, imply? What does this tell me about God, people, relationships, values, beliefs, life, ministry, me?

Write. Make your own paraphrase of the main truth that calls to you.

Pray. Talk back honestly to God about what He is saying to you.

Listen. Wait silently for further guidance. Ask for and expect the understanding and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Integrate. That day try to live out this truth or share it with others for their reflection.

Evaluate. Near the close of day, review the truth and the day to see how they came together in your walk with God in your world. Talk with God about it.

Revisit. When you start your

next study, reflect on your jottings of the previous study. On Sunday, reflect on your week of devotional journey.

In all of our choices concerning Bible study and devotion, we need to have regularity but be open to flexibility. Try different methods, times, places, and amounts. Try reading larger chunks (e.g., small book) on the Sabbath, and then reread the same material slowly through the week. Consider a Bible study retreat for a weekend—alone, with your spouse, or also with several friends.

In his excellent book, **Celebration of Discipline**, Richard Foster encourages us to grow also through other studies — Christian classics, nature, history, relationships, people, history, current events, and trends. I commend this book to you!

Yes, sometimes we feel like those youthful graduates: Get me as far away from study as possible. Study is work! But as we go on in life, we also discover that study can also mean fun, growth, usefulness, renewal, success, vitality, and even survival.

Haven't some of the best times of your life been when you discovered God and life in His Word? "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16). NOT "Out of here" but "into here" — we into the Word and God and His Word into us! □

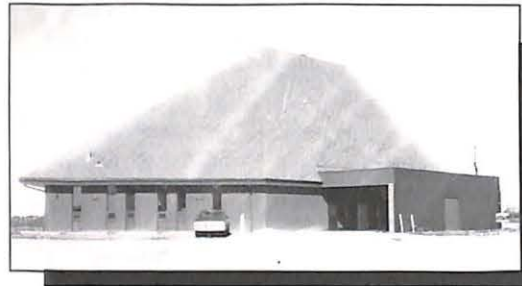
Exercises

Try it out:

- 1) Study Psalm 119, a paragraph or two a day. Notice what the Psalmist says about the meaning of the Word of God to him.
- 2) Use the Cook (Mayforth) Bible study method on the book of Mark or II Timothy.

Dr. Ronald E. Mayforth is Professor of Pastoral Theology at Edmonton Baptist Seminary (North American Baptist Divinity School), Edmonton, AB, and a member of the Conference Grow Task Force.

Expect Great Things from God —Attempt Great Things for God



Temple Baptist
Church, Leduc,
Alberta

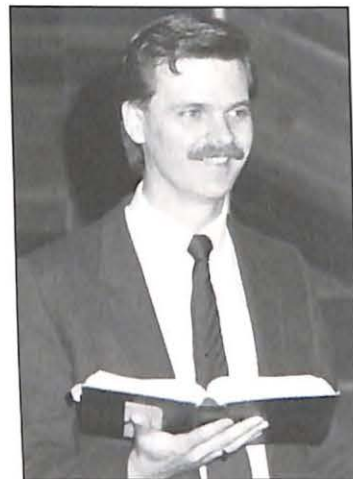
When William Carey, the father of modern missions, left England for India under the conviction and leadership of the Holy Spirit, he left behind many people who shook their heads. They told him he was foolish. But Carey had a vision. He knew what God wanted him to do, and he had to be obedient. "Expect great things from God . . . attempt great things for God," he said.

What a stirring challenge for our church! Our church has experienced *vision to see* for more than 60 years, also. It took vision to gather men and women together to pray, to love, to support, to teach, to lead, and to share Jesus with the city of Leduc, Alberta. It took vision to relocate, to buy eight acres, and build a sanctuary to seat 600 people. It took vision to do new things to bring the gospel of hope and assurance to the community.

Think about your church. Think about the people who had the vision to plant your church. What has been the vision of those through the years at the point where ministry has become more focused or changed to meet needs in your congregation and community?

As we begin this new decade (a time of unprecedented change in the world), we need to be people of vision: To see the potential for meeting the needs in our community and to be a community of faith where people discover that they are loved, accepted, and forgiven.

We need a vision to see people



G. Neil Parker

**"Do we have . . .
vision to see, faith
to believe, and
courage to do? It
really depends on
you."**

coming into a living, loving, and learning relationship with Jesus. Do you have a vision to see?

A *vision to see* comes from your heart's desire to please God. It is given shape through spiritually sensitive leadership in the church. It is born through the unity of the body submissive to the Lordship of Christ.

by G. Neil Parker

Outside of these things, we die a spiritual death. We will have no vision from the Lord. *We will perish.*

Beyond having a *vision to see*, we need a *faith to believe*. I love the benediction in Ephesians 3:20: "Now to Him who is able to do *immeasurably more* than all we ask or imagine."

How big is your God? Do you expect great things from God . . . immeasurably more things? How deep and wide and long is your faith? Do you have a *faith to believe* that "He who promised is faithful"? God has limitless resources. We need to grasp that! Because if our faith to believe is small, our vision to see will be smaller still. God is the faithful one, and He calls us to have faith in Him . . . a *faith to believe*.

But a *vision to see* and faith to believe are inadequate in themselves. Beyond these things, we need the *courage to do*. Certainly this is the message of James . . . faith and works go together. We can expect great things from God and be afraid to attempt great things for God.

The sincerity of our faith is made sure in the testing ground of our actions. It's a fabulous balance between the work of God and the work of God's people. It takes courage to confront our world with the gospel. Should it be otherwise?

Do we have . . . **vision to see, faith to believe, and courage to do?** It really depends on you. How are you and your church *confronting* the world with the Gospel? □

The Rev. G. Neil Parker is pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Leduc, Alberta.

compelled to serve

Edmonton Church Conducts Mercy Mission to Romania

by Kurt Remus

Central Baptist Church released Associate Pastor Lee Reimer from his responsibilities to go on a four-week outreach to a nation that was, until recently, a very closed and repressive society. Mrs. Reimer and their son Don accompanied him.

Central collected more than \$16,000 for this outreach. Meadowlark-Westland Baptist, Edmonton, and Parkland Baptist, Spruce Grove, AB, also gave.

The Reimers, along with two European drivers, traveled from West Germany into the Transylvania region of Romania. This Hungarian-speaking province, located just miles from the U.S.S.R. border, is one of the most impoverished regions in Romania. Other mission organizations have made deliveries into some of the larger centres, but rarely into the more obscure remote rural areas.

The goods, which had been purchased wholesale in Germany, included 15 tonnes of food, 2,000 Bibles, devotional books, clothing, and medicine. The two vans and the 10-tonne truck pulling a 10-tonne trailer made slow progress on the dirt back roads that are usually only travelled by horse wagons and ox carts.

When the team arrived in the various villages, they delivered the hampers to the most needy families, determined by the local pastor. Then in the evenings, rallies were held in the churches.

The Reimers were impressed by the spirit of humility of the Romanian Christians. Although the people in the churches were very poor materially, physical needs were not uppermost in their minds.



Pastor and Mrs. Reimer and local minister.

Pastor Reimer recalls, "They did not ask for anything except the Word of God. 'Pray for us. Bibles and songbooks are what we need,' was their only request."

As they travelled around Transylvania, the team discovered how destitute and needy the people are. The elderly must often fend for themselves. Some seniors have to work in the fields or herd cattle, even at age 80! The few who had a pension received only two dollars per month. The many orphans in this rural area are looked after by relatives, who usually barely have enough for their own families. Very little medication is available; for example, dentists must practise without anesthetics.

Money is rarely used. People mostly trade their home-produced goods at the local market. (Some of the foodstuffs that were given in the hampers, like coffee, would probably be traded on the market for a goose or some other more needed item).

Pastor Reimer states, "I wonder if these people even realize how poor they really are?"

But in spite of many needs, the people showed a spirit of generosity, thankfulness, and sacrifice.

One pastor who has four preaching stations supports himself with a tiny farm. His house was literally a shack (by our standards); yet any extras that he receives he reinvests into his churches.

A widow who recently had to sell her goat to purchase some desperately needed medicine was so grateful for the food hamper that she received that she insisted on giving the team a live chicken to take back to Canada! In gratitude, she gave out of her poverty.

Pastor Reimer observed, "Even after we had departed from the homes, we could still see the people standing outside tightly clasping their hands together in gratitude to the Lord for the help they had received."

Many of the hampers that were delivered had the names and addresses of the Canadian donors included. More than 50 thank you letters have already been received from these grateful fellow-Christians in Romania. Central Baptist also sent a container-load of much needed winter clothing and other supplies for distribution in Transylvania in August.

As a result of this outreach, the Reimers have an invitation to return to Romania for a two-week outreach in May 1991. They expect a group of 35 "midlifers" who know German or other East European languages to minister along with them conducting meetings, distributing food, and possibly helping to reconstruct some of the Romanian churches. □

Kurt Remus is Baptist Herald reporter for Central Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB.

People You Should Know

Responding to the Biblical Imperative, Compelled to Serve, people in our Conference are finding that living out the Christian life through service for others provides

fulfillment for the individuals involved and meets the deep needs of others. Some of these people you should know are introduced to you here. □

Find Fulfillment Through Serving

California couples work on Texas church

Four couples from Lodi, California, and one couple from Sacramento worked for two weeks in Rio Grande City, Texas. Howard and Jean Ferguson, Harry and Joanne Wiebe, Elwood and Colette Alberg, Don and Althea Millikan, and George and Shirley Wallace formed the work team.

"In that time, we were able to

insulate, sheetrock, tape, and texture the office and Sunday schoolrooms," says Howard Ferguson. "We painted the outside, the entry hall, and four of the Sunday school rooms. We also constructed a balcony in the Church."

The entire team reports they enjoyed getting to know Pastor Juan Luna, his family, and his congregation. "We were tired at the end of each day," says Ferguson, "but the Lord renewed our strength overnight. We learned that many retired people would like to help build if they knew about the need

early enough. Thanks to the Women's Missionary Fellowship and your contributions to the North American Baptist Conference for the financial help." □

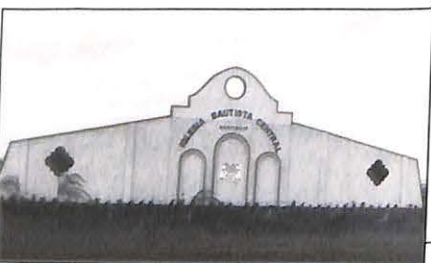
The volunteers from Lodi worked on this church building for two weeks.



A man with a vision

They came from South Dakota, Minnesota, Colorado, North Dakota, and Texas to Edinburg, Texas, to do volunteers-in-missions work at Iglesia Bautista Central. The project began as a dream after Henry Lang, a retired minister, read the report of the dedication in the **Baptist Herald** and of the unfinished facility.

"I wrote to Missionary Lindberg Ake for information about a crew volunteering to put classroom walls into the present structure," says



Lang. "Pastor Ake and his people drew a sketch of what they considered feasible for their needs. Since termites are a problem there, we decided to build a steel framework for the walls."

One block from the church, Pastor Ake found a business that could provide metal studs, sheetrock, ceiling, and other necessary materials.

In October 1989, at the South Dakota/Wyoming Association, Lang asked for donations and volunteers to go to Texas for two weeks in early February to work. Twelve to fifteen volunteers responded.

"Everyday our crew increased in number; one day 29 volunteers worked," recalls Lang. By the end of the first week, the walls were in, mostly taped and textured, and sealed.

"Our dream was to put the ceiling in the sanctuary, but we were short

of funds," says Lang. After prayer, almost every family responded with a sizeable personal check as well as the people of Iglesia Bautista Central. We put the ceiling up."

The people of Iglesia Bautista Central showed their appreciation by providing food every day as well as a special supper for all of the workers. One evening before the ceiling was completed, a church member threw her arms up and shouted, "like heaven." That expression was shared by many.

On Sunday, the 32-member volunteer workers choir gave a special musical at the Church. "Pastor Ake, his wife, and family are working hard on this field," says Lang. "Their services are well-attended. More than 60 attend the Wednesday evening prayer service. They hope to reach more people with these better facilities. We pray God's blessing on Iglesia Bautista Central Church in Edinburg, TX." □

Former minister serves in retirement

by Earl Shadle

Rev. Edgar B. Wesner may be retired from the pastoral ministry, but he certainly isn't retired from Christian service.

Wesner spent more than 10 years as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Tacoma, WA. Now he and his wife, Lillian, continue to live in Tacoma and worship with the members of Calvary Baptist.

One day he stopped in at the Tacoma Rescue Mission to volunteer his services. The Mission hired



him as Assistant Director of Men's Work for four days a week. He works as a counselor in their rehabilitation program and also has a Tuesday evening class.

The Tacoma Rescue Mission feeds the men and provides a bed for them, if needed. It also expects them to become involved in the six-month rehabilitation program. After the program, an attempt is made to locate jobs for the men and get them

involved in one of the local churches.

Another part of the Mission's outreach is the Hope Guest Home for Women and the Family Shelter.

Wesner also is involved at Calvary Baptist Church where he teaches a Sunday school class, works with a church layman one night a week in a class for people with life-threatening situations, and participates in a home Bible study.

His wife, Lillian, cares for several children in their home five days a week.

Edgar and Lillian Wesner demonstrate that being retired doesn't mean one has to quit—sit back and relax. God can use us at any age or stage in life. □

Earl R. Shadle is a member of Calvary Baptist Church, Tacoma, WA, and Baptist Herald representative there.



"Zapatos Para Los Ninos" (Shoes for the Children)

by Maureen Heinz

On November 18, 1989, my husband Mike and I packed up the family van with two of our boys, clothes for a warm climate, Bibles, games, and approximately 260 plus pairs of brand-new shoes. The sizes of these shoes ranged from the smallest to the largest. We were finally on our way, after months of planning, looking for sponsors, and praying for the "right things." The shoes were to be distributed among the orphans at four different orphanages along the Baja California peninsula.

Mike and I were accompanied by our children Gary (11) and Jason (9), Don Dam, his daughter Sharon (17), her friend Corinza (16), and our good friend Mary (21). We loaded Don's van with shoes and our van with luggage.

This project, "Zapatos para los Ninos," (Spanish for "Shoes for the Children") was supported lovingly through our church, Calvary Baptist in Tacoma. Everyone was in full spiritual support through prayers and encouraging words.

Realizing that many ministries go to Mexico to distribute toys, clothes, and food, we prayed that God would make visible an

otherwise unmet need.

The chances of the children in the orphanages and barrios ever having a new pair of shoes were slim to none. When we looked into our own closet at our shoes, we realized that we do take so much of our life for granted. It is not uncommon for these children in Mexico to go through life never really able to participate in some activities because of ill-fitting shoes. It is not uncommon for one child to come home from school and give the shoes to his brother, as it is his turn to wear the shoes.

The children of Saint Patrick's School in Tacoma and of Calvary Baptist's AWANA program and Sunday School helped us gather almost 300 pairs of shoes. Even our College and Career young people became involved.

As we distributed the shoes in Mexico, we played games with the kids and rolled up our sleeves to help bathe, clothe, and feed hundreds of Mexican children. □



Sunrise Church Gives Tender Touch

by June Johnson

Nearly three years ago, Sunrise Baptist Church in Fair Oaks, California, launched a volunteer visitation ministry to women. They selected a coordinator who was given the names of eight elderly shut-in women. Some lived in their own homes and others in long-term care facilities. At that time, eight women had volunteered to do visitation.

A group meeting was called; guidelines were formulated; and visitation assignments were made. It was decided that these people should be visited no less than every two weeks and telephoned on alternate weeks. In some cases, a weekly visit was indicated.

It was decided the group would meet every three months for a time of devotions and encouragement. The volunteers were asked to make a written report on all visits made. From these, the Director of Women's Ministries receives a report and reports to the church board. It also serves as a tool to make sure no one is omitted and to encourage accountability.

Recognizing that there must be a "touch" in order for any ministry to be effective, they chose the name Tender Touch for this ministry. This "touch" can be physical, emotional, or spiritual, or in most cases all three.

It was not long before it became evident that there are many needs beyond those of the elderly and shut-in. So the ministry was broadened to include all women at any age who "hurt" for any reason.

The purpose of Tender Touch then became to reach out to those who are in hospitals, mothers with sick infants and small children, those who are grieving over the loss of a loved one, those who are emotionally upset and need support and spiritual encouragement, wives of ill husbands, and many others including those who are terminally ill and face death.

"...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40).

The Lord very graciously called many more volunteers to meet our expanded needs. Look with me into the lives of some who have been touched by this ministry:

- It was not long until we found ourselves in the home of a young mother who had a two-year-old son. She was also caring for her husband who was losing the battle with cancer. As a young Christian, she and her small son had many questions that needed to be worked through. The comfort and support she received during her grieving time meant very much to her.
- Many other referrals began to come. There was a mother whose six-month-old baby was battling AIDS. She had to leave her other small children with a caretaker and stay in that Intensive Care Unit seven days a week, 24 hours a day. She was encouraged by the Word and prayer and benefited

by brief times of relief so she could get out.

- A totally helpless middle-aged woman was referred to Tender Touch. She is confined to a wheelchair and is not even able to feed herself. It was found that she had been rejected by her husband many years ago. He walked out on her when he realized that her muscle atrophy condition was getting progressively worse. More frequent visits to her have been encouraged, and she is now very happy. She was recently accepted into the church membership.
- We would not overlook a dear 90-year-old saint who cared for her invalid son all of his life. Within a month of each other, she lost him and her husband of many years. Nine months later, she suffered a massive stroke leaving her totally helpless and unable to speak. Following the two deaths, she was visited regularly. Great blessing came in paging through her torn and tattered Bible. It became evident the influence of her godly life has reached down to four generations and is touching the lives of her great-grandchildren. She is the great-grandmother of one of the children to whom Tender Touch ministers. This dear lady is unable to communicate, but she responds to the Word and prayer during the weekly visits at her bedside.
- Great blessing came to a 60-year-old lady who was suffering from a rare disease and finally lost the battle. Her only way of communicating was with her smile and a computerized device. She also brought great blessing to the Tender Touch volunteer who faithfully ministered to her and her

family even after her death.

These cases are examples from among the 80 to 100 visits made each month.

On a number of occasions, Tender Touch has ministered to those who are terminally ill. The volunteers have been at the bedside when they have gone through the "valley of the shadow of death..." (Psalm 23). It is common for these people to experience fear, but great comfort comes to them and their families to have someone stand by.

Tender Touch is not a nursing, housekeeping, or taxi service but volunteer workers who are willing to help do errands and limited housekeeping and provide transportation to the doctor in emergency cases.

The most recent extension of Tender Touch service is a tape ministry. A cassette tape of the Sunday morning message and a bulletin is brought weekly to those physically unable to attend church. This ministry is "behind the scenes," but there

is little doubt that the greatest blessing comes to those who reach out in this way.

The primary purpose of Tender Touch is to glorify the Lord Jesus who was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities and was in all points tempted as we are..." (Hebrews 4:15). □

June Johnson is the Tender Touch Coordinator at Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA.

challenged to grow

Ministers Retreat into Spiritual Renewal

by Jim Leverette

Some came mentally and physically exhausted — some reluctantly — due to crowded calendars and crammed agendas.

Some came filled with concern that this was simply going to be talk about growth without practical applications.

Some came with deep-seated hurts caused by unresolved tension and interpersonal conflicts.

Some came with open wounds received on the battleground of ministry.

Some came with hearts filled with joy as a result of long-awaited victories and accomplishments.

Regardless of how they came, each one met God in a significant and deeply personal way at a Spiritual Renewal Retreat for ministers and spouses at Lake Nutimik Baptist Camp. Each one left with renewed hope and a sense of expectation.

The leader of the retreat, the Rev. Jake Leverette, related how God was working in his life. His willingness, as area minister, to become vulnerable encouraged others to open themselves in humility before God and in fellowship with one another.

Following the retreat model offered by the Development Department of the North American Baptist Conference, we sought to understand and practice the spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, confession, worship, and guidance.

God spoke to us through His Word as we meditated on passages which refreshed our weary souls. He revealed Himself as we witnessed nature come to life following the hibernation of winter. He demonstrated His power as we watched lightning light up the sky and heard thunder roll from horizon to horizon. He cradled us in His arms of love as we wept before Him. He regenerated our fellowship with one another as we sang together, prayed together, and wept together in love.

Our communion service was a majestic capstone to our renewal experience. We were led by the Spirit of God in celebration.

As ministers and spouses of the Manitoba Baptist Association, we thank God for joyful renewal. □

The Rev. Jim Leverette is senior minister at Mission Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB.

What Happened to Ministries with Singles?

by Lyle E. Schaller

"One of our members came back from a conference on singles ministries and told us that today fewer than one-half of all Americans are married, and we should start a special ministry with singles. 'What do you think would be the best approach?' questioned the pastor of a 300-member church. 'If married couples represent only a minority of the population today, I guess we should be doing something, but where do we begin?'"

Which Approach?

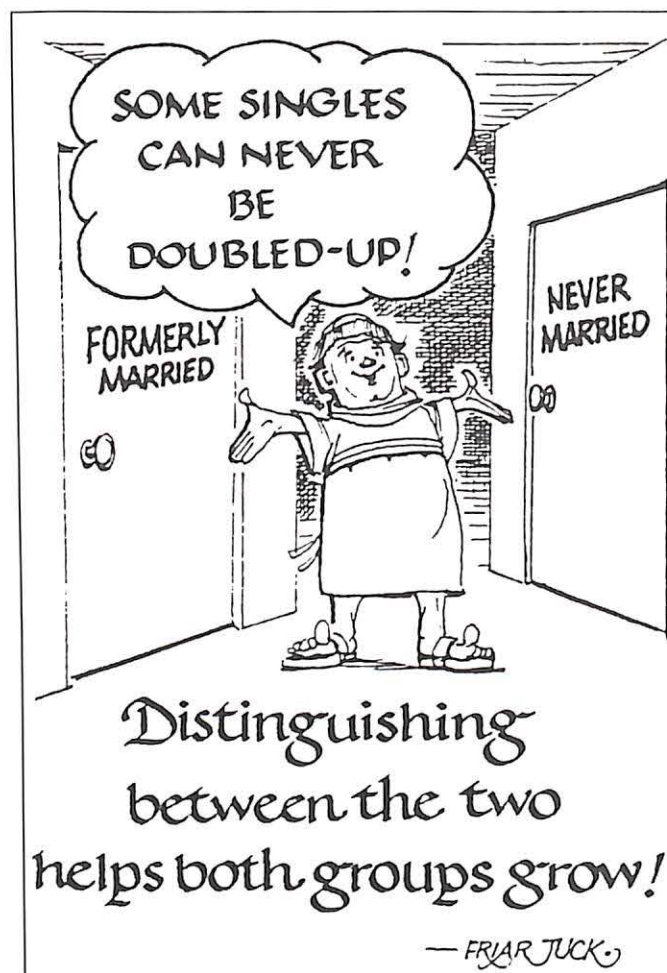
Back in the 1960s and 1970s, when singles ministries peaked in numbers and popularity, it became apparent that this broad umbrella covered several groups and many different needs. One approach was to respond to the loneliness and other needs of mature adults by creating senior citizens' groups. Frequently, these were built around eating together and/or trips. Often they made no reference to marital status, but most of the participants were not married.

A more widely publicized approach was the group formed largely of young never-married adults who were interested in finding a future spouse and concluded a church group might be a good place to look for a compatible mate. Obviously the larger the group, the better the odds for finding a future spouse.

Gradually, a third approach began to surface during the 1970s as the number of formerly married adults increased in numbers. This can be illustrated by one pair of statistics. Between 1962 and 1986 the number of currently divorced men age 35-54 quadrupled from 630,000 to over 2.7 million. The number of currently divorced women age 35-54 also quadrupled from 900,000 to over 4 million.

As singles groups became responsive to the needs of this rapidly expanding segment of the population, many of them were organized as mutual support groups or to help the participants improve their skills in building relationships or to minister to hurting people or to support and encourage those who were about to make a fresh start in life. (One example is the Phoenix Class, remarkably redemptive fellowship for couples past 40 who recently embarked on their second (or third) marriage.)

In many churches, the singles group of 1969 that included very few people past age 35 and was organized largely around fun, games, excitement, and parties has



been replaced by a much smaller group of formerly married adults, most of whom have passed their thirty-fifth birthday, with a far greater emphasis on caring, learning, and supporting one another. At least a few churches have made a point of staffing this approach with a happily married (or remarried) couple to model the fact that happy marriages do exist.

A fourth, and far more complex, approach has been to expand the old idea of a singles ministry into an umbrella concept covering several different audiences with a broad variety of programs. These may include groups and events such as (a) a mutual support group for young and recently widowed women, (b) divorce recovery workshops, (c) a fun, fellowship, and study program for mature adults that includes several trips a

year, (d) a group drawn largely from among those born in the 1940-60 era that is designed to help participants improve their skills in self-understanding and in interpersonal relationships, (e) a serious, in-depth Bible study group that meets for two or three hours weekly, (f) a servant group of people committed to helping others who are in need, (g) a group of singles that organizes and administers a money-raising event every year for missions — and also offers a wide-open door for new participants, (h) a support group or an advocacy group organized on behalf of persons with AIDS, (i) a travel group of young adults that is organized around bicycle trips or travel tours or parties or other events and experiences for younger, never-married adults born after 1960 — the distinctive feature is not "Who is invited"? but rather "Where are we going?", (j) a singles choir that sings at "the other service" on Sunday morning — the chancel choir sings at "the regular service," (k) a mutual support group for recently widowed adults who have passed their fiftieth birthday, (l) a monthly social gathering built around the evening meal as a means of attracting more males, (m) a serious study group led by an extremely competent teacher that meets regularly to read and reflect on a series of books, and (n) one Sunday morning (or Saturday evening) worship experience that is largely "owned and operated" by a group of single adults assisted by the minister or by a staff member with the expectation this will meet the needs of single adults of all ages including many who are not members of that congregation.

It is not uncommon to find many single adults who regularly participate in two or three or more of those events, groups, and programs. It also is important to note that many people first come under that umbrella by joining one group, but a year or two later have left that group and are now involved in some other group or activity.

What's New?

Instead of looking backward to reflect on these four different approaches as part of the process for launching your own ministry with singles, it may be useful to inquire about more recent changes.

The most obvious change is that the traditional singles ministries are increasingly oriented toward (a) the formerly married and (b) persons born before 1955.

A second change is the appearance of a new, very large, and distinctively different generation of young and never-married adults in their twenties and early thirties. Many of them openly and vigorously articulate their hostility toward any system that classifies people by marital status. They are not interested in participating in any organization that identifies itself as a singles group.

A third change is the lengthening period between marriage and the birth of the first child for women born after 1955. An increasing number of new mothers

have been married for five to ten years before the birth of the first child. For example, today the number of women giving birth to their first child after the mother's thirtieth birthday is more than double the figure for 1960.

A fourth change is that the evolutionary changes in the approach to single ministries has produced a growing number of new programs that focus on the needs of people rather than on marital status. A high quality ten-week program on improving one's skills in interpersonal relationships or the two-year walk through the Bible or the weekend bicycle trip or the ten-day mission work camp experience may draw equally from young never-married adults, young childless couples, the formerly married, parents, and mature adults.

A fifth change is that the biggest age cohort in the American population, the generation born in the 1956-62 era, is now coming back into the church in newsworthy numbers.

That Critical Question

This leads into the most critical question to be asked of those concerned with creating their congregation's outreach to this new generation of young adults. Do you want to focus on marital status and attempt to recreate yesterday? Or are you ready to rethink your approach?

One way of stating this question is, "If this new generation resists being classified by marital status, do we want to expand our ministry with the formerly married from earlier generations? Or do we want to concentrate our resources on expanding our outreach to young adults, regardless of marital status?"

One response is to retain a singles group as a meaningful entry for new people into your congregation, especially for the formerly married. The specific focus of this group and the basic organizing principles used to bring people together will depend on the skills and interests of the leaders and on the needs being addressed. This can be supplemented by offering that new generation of younger adults a wide variety of entry points including service on program and administrative committees, membership on special task forces, pioneering a new Bible study group, classes on improving one's relational skills, organizing new outreach ministries, trips, creating a new worship service, new programs designed for young adults, regardless of marital status, and participation in a wide variety of ministries of your congregation.

In other words, which is your number-one concern? To create a ministry with unmarried adults? Or to reach a new generation of younger adults through a multifaceted approach? Or do you have sufficient resources to accomplish both? □

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AIDS: Ministering beyond the Problems

by Stanley Grenz

Beginning in the early 1980s, a new and potentially devastating epidemic burst upon us: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. So menacing is this new killer that the mere mention of AIDS arouses our deepest emotions and our most disquieting fears.

As with crises in the past, the response of Christians to the AIDS epidemic is varied. Some say that the epidemic is a sinister plot to undermine our society. Others quarantine the blame for the disease on "the homosexuals" and pontificate that AIDS is God's wrathful judgment on this horrible sin. More recently, certain voices have concluded that the AIDS epidemic is a sign of the end times.

Responses such as these have led other segments of our society to view believers as Bible-thumping idiots or uncaring bigots. Of course, accusations of Christian inactivity and hostility in the midst of the AIDS crisis are often grossly overstated. Believers are repeatedly the first to display care and concern for persons in need.

Yet in many ways, the AIDS epidemic presents us with a dilemma. We sense that we ought to do something, but we are not sure exactly what. We know we are called to minister to people in need, but we wonder how to reach out when the needy person has this dreadful disease. These people are suffering from an illness, we know, but AIDS is no ordinary disease.

The bottom line is this: We are aware that the majority of persons with AIDS practice life-styles that violate biblical standards. AIDS is most often spread among adults either through sexual intercourse with an infected person (especially the anal intercourse practiced by homosexuals) or through the sharing of IV needles (as practiced by drug users). As a result, we often perceive it to be a sinners' disease.

AIDS, therefore, raises the very real question: How can we minister to the promiscuous or to drug abusers—that is, to "sinners"?

The Problem of Attitude

One problem we encounter in the attempt to engage in ministry to persons with AIDS focuses on our own attitudes of apathy, judgmentalism, and fear that readily arise from the perception that AIDS is a sinners' disease. Christians are not immune to such attitudes.

They grow apathetic, whenever they conclude that persons in the high risk groups are beyond the pale of their church's mission, which focuses on "respectable" people. "Do we really want those types in our congregation?"

Christ calls His people to overcome whatever unwholesome hindrances haunt the hidden recesses of their hearts, for the sake of ministry to others.

They move into judgmentalism when they believe that people who contract AIDS are simply reaping the just punishment of their actions. "Why should we assist those who are wallowing under the just hand of an angry God?"

And they quake with fear at the thought that AIDS is a contagious disease which has the potential to threaten them and their loved-ones. "What if I would catch AIDS?"

Such attitudes, although impediments to ministry to persons suffering with AIDS, are simply not easily dispelled. Before we can properly deal with them, we must acknowledge that when viewed only in human terms these feelings may be quite natural, and they do have some legitimacy.

Humans prefer to socialize with persons similar to themselves; no wonder we want to meet only "re-

spectable Christians" at church. Many who now suffer with AIDS have contracted the disease through harmful life-styles that placed them at risk; no wonder we sense that justice is thereby served. And contact with HIV carriers does place a person at a small but real danger of infection; no wonder we pull away when confronted with an infected person.

Even though these attitudes are understandable, for the Christian they cannot have the last word. Christ calls His people to overcome whatever unwholesome hindrances haunt the hidden recesses of their hearts, for the sake of ministry to others.

Apathy, therefore, must give way to concern, a concern that arises when our hearts resonate with the concerned heart of God. We dare view no one as lying outside the boundary of the mission of the church, because no one lies beyond the power of God to save.

Judgmentalism must be melted away in the overflow of a profound sense of grace. This occurs as we catch the full meaning of the great Biblical principle of justification by grace through faith alone apart from works.

Whatever role AIDS may actually play in God's sovereign purposes, this much we can say with certainty, the AIDS epidemic is an opportunity for the people of God—who themselves are the recipients of God's compassionate grace—to show forth Christ-like compassion in ministry to persons in need.

Christians are called to overcome the fear of contagion as well. Even if AIDS were highly contagious (which medical evidence indicates is not the case), the Christian mandate would require that we risk our lives for the sake of ministering to the needs of others.

Risk-taking is but the outworking of obedience to Jesus' statement, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" (Mark 8:35).

If in obedience to Christ, we would minister in the midst of the AIDS epidemic, we must begin by praying that God's love for all sinners would abound in our hearts and dispel all attitudinal hindrances. For "perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18).

The Problem of Condoning Sin

In addition to the matter of attitudes, Christians are faced with an important theological problem: The majority of persons with AIDS have engaged in immoral life-styles, especially homosexuality. How, therefore, can we minister to the sinner without condoning the sin?

A beginning point for finding a solution to this problem arises as we look more objectively at the disease itself. Immoral acts do not cause AIDS. Nor is homosexual encounter (or IV drug use for that matter) the only way in which the AIDS-virus can be contracted, even though to date, the primary means of spreading the disease has been through sexual activity.

It is simply not the case that every AIDS-sufferer has contracted the disease through personal life-style choices. In fact, when the HIV enters a bloodstream, it doesn't ask about the moral state of its host. It carries out its destructive activities without making ethical discriminations. Therefore, regardless of how it is related to divine judgment, AIDS is an enemy of humankind — of all of us — just as any other illness is.

Because AIDS, like every illness,

is an enemy that one day will be banished from God's kingdom, we can both fight the disease and minister to the sick without thereby condoning those sins that place persons at risk of contracting AIDS. It is simply not the case that ministering to persons with the disease constitutes sympathy with, or support

Because they are confronted with a hopeless and terminal disease, many AIDS patients and their families are interested in questions about death, the afterlife, and God.

for, practice that Christian caregivers perceive to be immoral. In the same way, ministry to persons with lung cancer does not entail support for smoking; involvement in alcohol rehabilitation does not imply sympathy for alcoholism; and providing care for the heart attack patient does not suggest condoning of North American eating habits.

Fulfilling Our Calling

In order to fulfill our calling to minister to the needy in the midst of the AIDS crisis, we must be able to separate the medical and the moral aspects of AIDS, which aspects so often are simply fused together. Such a separation can be made that includes a proper Christian abhorrence for sin, as we come to see that in ministering to AIDS victims, we are not condoning what we believe are immoral life-styles. While it does often carry moral overtones, AIDS itself is not intrinsically a moral question.

In fact, the greatest moral issue facing the church in the midst of the

AIDS epidemic is not the Christian-view of homosexuality or drug abuse, as important as these are. Rather, the central issue is whether Christ's disciples will be obedient to the mandate of their Lord, a mandate which includes offering an informed and compassionate response to individuals touched by this epidemic.

As Christians, we are called to view persons with AIDS as persons whom God loves and who stand in need of the healing touch of Christ. When the church opens its heart for those touched by AIDS, we may find, to our surprise, people who have been divinely prepared to receive our ministry. Because they are confronted with a hopeless and terminal disease, many AIDS patients and their families are interested in questions about death, the afterlife, and God. We may discover, to our amazement, fertile soil for the good news of available salvation in Jesus Christ.

The problems that hinder ministry in the midst of the AIDS epidemic are real. They are not to be sidestepped or dismissed prematurely, but must be dealt with honestly.

At the same time, the Christian community is called to move into the world of need in order to be the people of God in the midst of hurt. The mandate Christ has given to us knows no human boundaries but encompasses all who are in need, including persons touched with AIDS. For this reason, we are challenged through the AIDS crisis to turn our attention away from the problems that so readily arise and toward the task of ministry in the midst of the AIDS epidemic. □

Dr. Stanley Grenz, Burnaby, BC, former Professor of Systematic Theology, N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, is now professor at Carey Hall and Regent College, Vancouver, BC. Dr. Grenz and Dr. Wendell Hoffman are co-authors of the recently released book, AIDS: Ministry in the Midst of an Epidemic, Baker Books.



Bayer disciples new Christian

NOVO HAMBURGO, RS, BRAZIL. "The winter in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, is characterized by an abundance of oranges," says Missionary Ken Bayer. "As they are maturing in the Fall, one is hardly aware of them and then suddenly there they are!"

"Such has been the growth of some of our people in the Baptist church in Novo Hamburgo. I had been counselling one couple in premarital sessions. With his problems and resistance to let God take control, I had resigned his case to prayer and a "wait and see" position. Suddenly his father died, and overnight, his faith grew. Now he is enrolled in the baptismal class. Like an orange, his growth and maturity were at once evident. We thank God for this." □



Mosses praise God for His work in Japan

JAPAN. Join Robert and Karin Moss in praising God for His faithfulness in bringing people to Himself in Japan:

- For the spiritual growth of Mr. Matsuda. He became a Christian through the testimony of his wife, who died of cancer.
- For Miss Okura who became a Christian after the Mosses left Japan in 1986. She now has a strong testimony among her friends.
- For Mr. Suzuki who has also grown in his faith and helped direct the young people's group. His testimony has influenced a generation of young people.
- For Mr. Mitsui who has attended church regularly following the sudden death of his son. He is now a seeker. Also, for the strong faith of his wife, a member of the Baptist church. Thank you, Lord, for working something good out of this tragic event.
- For our friends, the Sakaises who came to church once (an evangelistic meeting). Thank you, Lord, that You are faithful and Your Word will work in their hearts in Your time.
- For Mrs. Morikawa and her husband who are seriously seeking Christ Jesus.
- For Mrs. Nakamura who after years of contact with short-term missionaries is showing real interest in Christianity.
- For the Ladies Bible Classes and their growing interest and conviction.
- For the Ishitanises and the chance to share the real message of salvation as opposed to that of the Jehovah's Witness'. Thank you, Lord, that Mrs. Ishitani has started coming to Bible class.
- For the Itos and their willingness to listen.
- For the Matsushimases who consider us friends rather than teachers and are now in the States. Thank you, Lord, for putting them where they can meet more of Your servants.
- For the Nishidas and their growing desire to find some hope, some answers.
- For Mr. and Mrs. Miwa. Thank you, Lord, that even though they have shown very little interest in You

that You are so interested in them. We leave them in Your hands, where they have been all along.

The Mosses have completed a year of missionary service in Japan. □



Jerzyk helps villagers put Bible in their language

JOS, NIGERIA. Although the village of Bakin Koal is not in Missionaries Ken and Sharon Jerzyk's mission work area of Jos, Nigeria, they had a chance to spend time and linguistic skills with some of the Bakin Koal villagers in putting the Scriptures into their language. Sharon and Ken spent a weekend with these villagers, which was probably their most "bush" experience yet in Nigeria.

"It was a delight to arise at 5:00 a.m. for morning prayers, go trekking through the hills where the villagers had moved throughout the years to escape the Muslims, watching football, and seeing the faces of the Steering Committee as they read a primer—a booklet of their language—for the first time." □

Evans talks about God as an adoptive Father: 30 respond

LEGAZPI CITY, PHILIPPINES. Filipinos are raised to fear God as a wrathful, fault-finding Judge who is eager to throw people into hell. Years of exposure to this kind of thinking does not immediately disappear when people receive



Christ, and many Christians continue to view God in this way.

During a recent discipleship session, Missionary Greg Evans spoke about God as our adoptive father. "That night about 30 people came to realize how much God loves them," says Evans, "how He chose them to be His own. There was great spiritual healing as a sense of God's love, kindness, and fatherhood filled His children. God was right there in the room with us, and everyone knew it. Sessions like that are the reason we are here. They make all the frustrations and disappointments worthwhile, and lives are dramatically changed." □

Bienerts note setbacks and progress in planting a church in Brazil

by Keith and Lilyane Bienert

PORTO ALEGRE, RS, BRAZIL. Setback and progress are the two key words to summarize the last few months of our ministry.

Setback: Our people were disappointed over the postponement regarding their building project. Since that setback, enough money was provided by our mission to start a church building. However, another major setback occurred when the new president of Brazil took office and froze the money in saving accounts for one and one half years, which after that time will only be parcelled out over a 12-month period. Thus the wait continues.

Progress: In spite of this setback, many changes have taken place. Our status changed from an evangelistic project dependent on the mother church to a more independent church planting project with our own administration. It is called New Life Baptist Church.

We changed our program and the times of our meetings. With these positive changes, our attendance increased, so it was necessary to make some renovations in our present building and to add a Sunday school classroom at the back.



We are making good use of the added space as we now average about 33 in Sunday school and 38 in the worship service with a record of 68. We still need to provide benches and tables in the Sunday school classroom and make other renovations. We will do so as money is available.

Angela, a seminary student, ministers along with us on the week-ends. Three members of the youth group of the mother church, where we work as youth sponsors, recently received Christ as Savior. Pray for their spiritual growth. Pray also for the start and success of home evangelistic Bible study groups. □

University graduate confronted with Christianity

by Ron and Joan Stoller

TSU, JAPAN. The dormitory, located on the third floor of



the Christian Education Center, has 10 young university men living in it.

One student who has lived in the dormitory for five years graduated from the six-year medical program recently. Mr. Arima came to us from Kyushu (the southern island) and was very quiet during the first few years. Arima became interested in motorbikes. One time he was found covered with blood after falling off a dike road. Several times, he would return to the dormitory and head straight to his room to recover from too much drink.

During this last year, Ron has had some very good contact with Arima. We have talked about lots of different topics, and religion and Christianity have been discussed several times. Before he left for his trip to Australia for one month (a graduation gift from his parents), Ron talked with him about understanding Christianity personally. He said that Ron was one of his best friends now, but at the present, he can't make a decision.

Pray for the Bible Club and the Tsu Church as they assume the student work that the Stollers have had for 12 years. Pray for Mr. Arima and men like him who have had contact with the Stollers and Christianity for several years but don't feel the need now. Pray that God's Word will speak to them in His timing. □

ERNA KANNWISCHER STURHAHN (75), Winnipeg, MB; born March 27, 1915, in East Prussia; died June 7, 1990; married William Sturhahn, a pastor who served churches in South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Manitoba as well as in the Baptist Immigration and as Area Minister; active member, musical ministry, Women's Missionary Fellowship, King's Daughters Society, McDermot Ave. Baptist Church; predeceased by her husband in 1980; survived by a daughter, Dorothy (Arthur) Patzia; two sons: Richard (Grace) and David (Audrey); three brothers: Arthur, Walter (Dorothy), and Arnold (Nellie) Kannwischer; brothers and sisters-in-law: Agnes and Bruno Hiller, Hannah and Walter Blessen, and Katy Sturhahn; seven grandchildren; Dr. John Hisel and the Rev. Werner Dietrich, pastors, funeral service. Memorial Fund: St. Boniface Hospital Research Center or McDermot Ave. Baptist Church Building Fund.

DR. HUGO LUECK (87), Lakewood, OH; born Sept. 19, 1902, Lodz, Poland; died March 14, 1990; married Gertrude Wenske, 1933; studied at Seminary in Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1921-22; Rawdon College, Leeds, England, 1922-25; Leeds University, Leeds, England, 1926-28 (BA); University of London, England, 1929-30 (BD); Hamburg Baptist Seminary, Hamburg, Germany, 1930-31; ordained in 1928, Collingworth, Yorkshire, England; professor, Baptist Seminary, Lodz, Poland, 1931-33; dean, Baptist Seminary, Lodz, Poland, 1933-39; represented the German Baptists in Poland at the 1939 Baptist World Alliance Congress in Atlanta, Georgia; when WWII broke out, he remained in USA, separated from family 'til 1947; pastor, N.A.B. Conference churches in Manitowoc and Milwaukee, WI; Spokane, WA; Onoway, AB, and Regina, SK; taught at N.A.B. College, Edmonton, AB; professor of New Testament and Church History, N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, 1952-75; DD degree, N.A.B. Seminary, 1969; survived by his wife, Gertrude; daughters: Christa (Del) Wiese and Gisela (George) Goetz; sister, Ruth Effa; brother, Rev. Alfred Lueck; six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; the Rev. Rick Weber and Chaplain Erhard Knoll, pastors, funeral service.

ROSE ELIZABETH LAMBRETH (94), Houston, TX; born Feb. 6, 1896, in Corrigan, TX; died May 4, 1990; member, Greenvine Baptist Church, Burton, TX; survived by two daughters: Inez (Robert) Ingram, Houston, TX; Dorothy (Edgar) Gates, Burton, TX; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; the Rev. Don Mashburn and Dr. Jerry K. Minton, pastors, funeral service.

LOUISE SEMRAU (83), Medicine Hat, AB; born Dec. 2, 1906, to John and Margaret (nee Erfle) Schneider in Goodrich, ND; died June 15, 1990; married Gust Semrau, July 23, 1928; member, Grace Baptist Church, Medicine Hat; predeceased by her parents and two sisters; survived by her husband, Gust; two sons: Leonard (Helen), Edmonton; Clarence (Shirl), Calgary; three sisters: Katie Lautermilch, Leona Kornelson, Doris Tonks; two brothers: Ted and Art Schneider; one grandson, Perry; four granddaughters: Cheryl, Lori, Tammara and Maureen (Craig) Moody (N.A.B. Conference missionary), Cameroon, West Africa; the Reverends M. Giraldo and R. Hoffman, pastors, funeral service.

CLIFFORD GEORGE KRAMER (77), Parkersburg, IA; born May 10, 1913, to George and Tena (Huisinga) Kramer in Butler County, IA; died July 7, 1990; married Gertrude E. Haata, Jan. 15, 1938; member, Aplington Baptist Church, Aplington; predeceased by his parents, sister, Irene Meyer, and brother-in-law, Harold Burch; survived by his wife, Gertrude; three sons: Dennis (Carolyn Jean), Aplington; Rodney (Robin) Windom, MN; Milton (Michelle) Glendale, AZ; sister, Laura Burch; 11 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; the Rev. James Renke, pastor, funeral service.

EMIL FLEMKE (86), Edmonton, AB; born March 19, 1904; died July 17, 1990; survived by his son Gunter and his wife Sharon; two daughters: Lily (Randy) MacDonald and Rita Flemke, all of Edmonton; and five grandchildren; predeceased by his wife Liesbeth in 1975; the Reverends Henry Goliath and Loren Stark, pastors, Zion Baptist Community Church, funeral service.

WILHELM MUTH (90), Winnipeg, MB; born Feb. 20, 1899, in Wohlynen; died Dec. 30, 1989; member, Mission Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB; predeceased by his wife, Alwine, Oct. 15, 1976; survived by his four sons: Rubin (Lotte), Leo, and Ernst (Carol), Winnipeg, Arthur (Lilo), Ontario; four daughters: Helene (Ewald), Elfriede (Reinhard), Gertrud (Sam), Winnipeg; Hildegard (David), Cincinnati, OH; 20 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; the Rev. Eberhard Hees, pastor, funeral service.

REV. OTTO OELKE (94), Kitchener, ON; born Mar. 7, 1896, in Slugoschin; died July 1, 1990; married Charlotte Haupt, Dec. 5, 1922, who predeceased him in 1966; married Luise Lemke, May 25, 1968; graduated from seminary in Hamburg-Horn, Germany; served churches in West Prussia and East Prussia from 1923-1945; served as evangelist in many surrounding churches; immigrated to Canada in 1966, where he served as interim minister at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC; pastored Salem Baptist Church, Kitchener, ON; survived by his wife, Luise; two daughters: Anneliese Sadowski, Gisela (Martin) Lohse; two sons: Dieter (Lori), Benno (Gerlinde); stepchildren: Helga (Heinz) Zukowski, Gert (Johanna) Lemke, and Joachim (Ruth) Lemke; brother, Benjamin Oelke, California; two sisters: Adelgunde Reichert and Hulda Kauth, Germany; sister-in-law, Luise Oelke, Germany; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; the Rev. F. Kahler, Central Baptist, Kitchener; Rev. W. Dietrich and Dr. J. Hisel, McDermot Ave. Baptist, Winnipeg, pastors, funeral service.

WALTER JOHN WILZEWSKE (74), Reedsburg, WI; born Nov. 2, 1915, to Otto and Lillian (Voek) Wilzevske of North Freedom, WI; died July 3, 1990; married Elsie Jahnke, Sept. 19, 1945; faithful member, former deacon, faithful servant, North Freedom Baptist Church; former N.A.B. Northwestern Conference moderator; strong supporter of church planting; survived by his mother, Lillian (98); wife, Elsie, and daughter, Lois, of Reedsburg; son John (Mary), and one grandson; two brothers: Emerson (Jeanette) and Alvin (Mary), and three sisters: Marie, Helen (Alvin) Hess, and Mabel (Reuben) Graetz.

Making Your Last Will and Testament a Last Will and Testimony

History well remembers Patrick Henry. He was involved in the revolutionary war and was made famous for his statement, "Give me liberty or give me death." We also know that Patrick Henry was a believer in Jesus Christ. He made a statement to that effect in his will.

He told his heirs in his last will and testament, which is on public record today, that if he had left them nothing in terms of worldly riches but had given them a faith in Jesus Christ, they would be of all people most wealthy.

And he added that if he had left them all of the wealth of the world and had not left them a faith in Jesus Christ, they would be of all people most destitute.

Another man, who is not quite so well-known, was Summit County, Ohio, Common Pleas Judge Claude V.D. Emmons.

He left his wife, Thelma, something much more valuable than his estimated \$200,000 estate when he

died. He left her his love, publicly declared in a probate court filing.

According to a handwritten will signed 45 years earlier, all of his property went to his "dearly beloved wife and companion," Thelma McClister Emmons.

The will read: "The above bequest is so made by me for the reason that it was through her untiring efforts that I achieved whatever success I have and for her comforting aid in time of sickness, trouble and sorrow, and also to make more apparent and public the ardent love and deep admiration that I bear for the sweetest and dearest wife and pal in the world."

He was 78 when he died and had been a Common Pleas Judge for 30 years until he retired in 1973. He was married 51 years.

If you were to die and 200 years from now one of your descendants wanted to find out whether or not you were a man or woman of faith, could that fact be determined from an examination of official records and documents, which you left

behind, such as it was from the will of Patrick Henry?

Or will your spouse, children, or close friends have continued memory of your expression of love for them, as expressed in your will?

If your will does not contain a personal testimony or an expression of love, you might want to consider this addition.

Or if you do not have a will, this will serve as a reminder that this important document needs to be prepared.

We have available for you a "Will and Trust Planning Guide" which can serve as an important tool in the design or review of your will. We will be happy to make it available to you at no cost or obligation.

(Neither the Development Department nor the N.A.B. Conference is engaged in rendering legal or tax advice. For advice or assistance in specific cases, the services of an attorney should be obtained. The purpose of this article is to provide information of a general character only.) □

☐ **Yes**, please send me a free **Will and Trust Planning Guide**. I understand there is no cost or obligation.

Please indicate if:

☐ Your estate is over \$600,000 or

☐ You own your own business

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Code _____

Home Phone () _____ Business Phone () _____

Birthdate _____ Spouse's Birthdate _____

Mail to Dr. Connie Salios, North American Baptist Conference
1 South 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3994
Phone: (708) 495-2000; FAX: (708) 495-3301.

President's Focus

by Manetta Hohn,
WMF president,
Kelowna, BC



Challenged to Grow Through Solitude and Silence

Have you considered solitude and silence as a means to spiritual growth? These two commodities are almost unheard of in today's society where noise, rush, and constant activity seem to be the norm. Being alone and in silence sometime during each day, week, or perhaps once a month, is essential for a well-balanced, purposeful life. It helps us put people, situations, ourselves into perspective as we become honest and open with ourselves and before God. Only then do we begin to discover our real selves and our needs.

God's Word has much to say about being still and quiet. "In stillness and in staying quiet, there lies your strength" (Isaiah 30:15, NEB). "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). It was in a still gentle voice that the Lord spoke to Elijah. After the noise and confusion of the world was past, He was able to speak. Even Jesus needed times to get away from His busy days to be alone with His Father. These quiet times of renewal sometimes came after the day's activities were over; other times early in the morning or even all night.

Planned Solitude

Solitude is a choice—to be alone for a purpose. We must be convinced of the value of being

alone some part of each day to tap our inner source of inspiration, to concentrate without interruptions; otherwise, we will make no attempt to arrange for it.

Artists, writers, musicians, and saints have known this for centuries. They must be alone and in quiet surroundings to create, to reflect, to pray. It is time we, too, learn this.

Many people, particularly homemakers, feel they cannot find time in their schedules for solitude. But if we are convinced that time alone with God is important to replenish our spirits, dry from the demands of life that would tear us apart, we will work it into our schedule. We set aside time for business appointments, a trip to the hairdresser, or shopping. We need to have the same attitude about our times of solitude.

At times, getting up earlier in the morning is very rewarding, and God will provide you with His strength for the day. Susanna Wesley always challenged me. With her large family and small home, she could not possibly get away for an hour. However, she trained her children to respect her time of prayer each day as she would sit in the room, put a blanket over her head, and spend time alone with God. I'm sure none of us need to take measures like this, but we do need to plan for times alone with God.

Interior Solitude

All of us need solitude and silence to balance the crazy pace of our lives; but some people are afraid to be alone. The quietness often shows them their own emptiness—that true self which they do not want to face. Having achieved physical solitude is not enough. Interior solitude is true solitude.

To find this, we must make every effort to quiet the voices inside of us that would cause concern. I believe that was what Jesus meant when He told us not to be anxious about food and clothes. Jesus told us to set our minds on God's righteousness and His justice (Matthew 6:32-33). In solitude, we need to focus on those things that build righteousness for ourselves, our family, and our community.

When I asked a friend of mine about her experience with solitude, she said, "In retrospect, I have noticed that it has been during times of heartache and pain, during times of troubles, I have sought to be alone. Not only alone in my room, but completely apart from my daily surroundings. I have deliberately gone for long walks, sat down beside a roaring, noisy stream and there experienced solitude—a solitude with God."

When our choir sang, "Stand Still and See His Glory," it reminded me again that often I have missed seeing God because I did not take time to stand still. With the "Martha" nature I have, I find this difficult. I want to learn more from "Mary" for Jesus said, "that shall not be taken from her."

As one grows older and reflects on life, one often sees a lack in this area. I challenge younger women to make this a high priority in their lives now. The secret of contented solitude is one we would all do well to learn and practice. It is an exercise in Christian spiritual discipline. □

From the Director



by Linda Ebel
women's ministries director

Women have been created with a unique responsiveness to God. According to a survey, Christian women have an overwhelming desire to grow in their understanding of their faith. Not only do they want to assimilate facts, there is a strong desire to react to this information and respond with deep feeling and intensity. Yet with the demands of our culture snarling these desires, we are frustrated in our attempts to show affection to the things of God.

During the past two years, I have crisscrossed North America speaking at women's retreats. Women attend these events by the hundreds, hoping to deepen their walk with God while building friendships. Schedules have been packed with plenary sessions, workshops, and recreation. Almost without exception, women have returned home exhausted yet buoyed up by what they have experienced.

Webster defines retreat as "a period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation, and study." Another has defined retreat as "the opportunity to meet with God in silence and solitude," emphasizing the priority of the retreat as coming apart from the regular routine to be with God, rather than just to talk about God.

This year we began our Conference emphasis on the Biblical

Imperative, Challenged to Grow. Across the Conference, there have been spiritual renewal retreats which focus on a threefold process of renewal: relationship (1 John 1:1-4); reflection (Proverbs 24:30-34); and rest (Matthew 11:28-30). An excellent handbook, *A Spiritual Renewal Retreat*, has been prepared by the Development Department staff at the Conference office to help plan such a retreat. Each pastor has received this handbook.

I would encourage each women's group to plan a Spiritual Renewal Retreat for the women in your church which follows this format. Not all women in your church will be ready for this experience. Those who participate will experience a deepening of their relationship with Jesus Christ. You will reap great dividends in establishing a solid leadership for your ministry with the women of your church. □

Tools for Ministry

Jesus, Man of Prayer by Margaret Magdalen. (InterVarsity Press / 1987) Author draws alongside Jesus to learn from Him. She introduces us afresh to the man whose whole life was an expression of prayer—whether in words or in silence, whether alone or with others, whether in joy or in sorrow, whether in full awareness or the Father's presence or in the utter desolation of the cross.

Scriptural Meditation: The Listening Side of Prayer by Cheryl Biehl. (Questar Publishers / 1981 and 1989) Explores the Biblical practice of meditation. Contents include: "What Does the Bible Say About Meditation?" "What Are the Promises of Meditating?" "How Do I Meditate?" "Meditation Examples," and "Questions and Answers."

Too Busy Not to Pray: Slowing Down To Be with God by Bill Hybels. (InterVarsity Press / 1988) Not a comfortable book to read; it makes you look at your own habits and thoughts. But it will offer some startling insights on the power of personal prayer. You can learn the art of slowing down to meet with God, to talk with God, to walk with God.

Lord, I Want to Have a Quiet Time: Learning to Study the Bible for Yourself by Carolyn Nystrom. (Harold Shaw Publishers / 1984) Author demonstrates the inductive Bible study method in 52 weeks of personal Bible study in both Old and New Testaments. The ten chapters of this book deal with major topics of the Christian life. Designed for the quarter system used in many small group studies and church schools.

My Partner Prayer Notebook by Becky Tirabassi. (Oliver-Nelson / 1984) A quiet time organizer that will help you journalize your prayers, record God's answers and ideas, and store inspirational teaching and studies. It can also become a partner to help you be accountable as you keep a daily appointment with God and organize your prayers and Bible reading.

Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. (Random House / 1978)

Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence. (Fleming H. Revell and Paulist Press / 1978)

2000

Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives

Called to Worship

Grueneich presents concert at Gladwin church

■ GLADWIN, MI. Round Lake Baptist Church held a youth concert featuring Dan Grueneich, of Rock Rapids, IA. Grueneich is involved in music and youth ministries. "Our congregation enjoyed an evening of praise, worship, and challenge," reports Jean Jurgensen. The Rev. Robert F. Brown is pastor, and Rev. Pat Clarey is youth pastor.

Spruce Grove's worship team gives leadership to services

■ SPRUCE GROVE, AB. The Worship Team of Parkland Baptist Church has been directing the evening worship with renewed vigour.

"The combination of vocalists, guitarists, pianist, drummer, and occasionally the brass instrumentalists lend a special note of leadership to our praise services," reports Marj Hadlington. The Rev. Dou-

glas Bittle is pastor.

Eureka church incorporates a variety of worship forms

■ EUREKA, SD. Songs of praise and adoration to the Lord of Lords and King of Kings were sung by the choir of First Baptist Church for Choir Sunday. Pat Grenz directed the choir and Esther Grosz served as accompanist.

Another Sunday morning, "We had a blessed time as the Rev. Perry Schnabel, pastor, presented a musical sermon," says Irene Kusler. "Solos sung by him, intertwined with the morning's message, were an inspiration."

The Men's Brotherhood had a singfest on another Sunday evening, followed by a time of fellowship. At an earlier time, men from six area churches participated in a Baptist Men's Annual Music Night. Pastor Perry Schnabel directed the combined men's chorus.

Commissioned to Witness

Praise God for people receiving Christ as Savior and for His growing church

■ CHANCELLOR, SD. First Baptist Church experienced spiritual growth over the past few months through various ministries of the Church.

The Rev. Robert Walther, assistant director of church planting—field operations, Sioux Falls, SD, spoke during a series of

meetings, and Area Minister Ralph Cooke visited the Church. The senior youth shared a musical drama, "Friends Forever," which they also presented at the South Dakota Correctional Facility; and Pastor Harry Haas extended the right hand of fellowship to ten people, three by baptism. —Ray DeNeui

■ SHATTUCK, OK. The Rev. Fred Fuchs baptized four young ladies and wel-

comed them into the fellowship of Ebenezer Baptist Church. —Martha Schoenhals

■ SPRUCE GROVE, AB. Three adults and seven youth were baptized by Pastor Douglas Bittle, and with four others, were welcomed into the fellowship of Parkland Baptist Church. "Our worship family has grown to 238 this year," reports Marj Hadlington. The youth group has grown by invitation and encouragement from 15 to 76 young people since September. Rod Boss is minister of youth.

■ GLADWIN, MI. Nine people were baptized and along with three other couples became members at Round Lake Baptist Church. Their commitment to Christ ranged from seven years to one month. The Rev. Robert F. Brown is pastor. —Jean Jurgensen

■ CAMROSE, AB. Seven young people were baptized by Pastor Mark Morris at Century Meadows Baptist Church. "The Church was filled to capacity for this special occasion as each youth gave a testimony of willingness to accept and serve the Lord," reports Ken Gerber.

■ MCCLUSKY, ND. An infant was dedicated at McClusky Baptist Church by the Rev. V. Schneider. —Marion Kirschman

■ RED DEER, AB. Unity Baptist Church received

nine new members into their fellowship: two by baptism, three by transfer of letter, and four by testimony. The Rev. Dennis Liesch is pastor.

■ REGINA, SK. A child dedication service was held at Faith Baptist Church. The Rev. Gerald Scheel is pastor. —Vera Rosom

■ JAMESTOWN, ND. The Rev. Ray Hoffman held a dedication service for three babies at Temple Baptist Church. —Leona Meisch

Parkland holds "Outreach '90" weekend

■ SPRUCE GROVE, AB. Parkland Baptist Church reached out to the county of Parkland through "Outreach '90," an evangelistic weekend featuring the Rev. Steve and Judy Clarke, CMA's National Evangelist for Australia. The weekend included music, evangelism services, men's breakfast, ladies luncheon, and youth rally. The Rev. Douglas Bittle is pastor. —Marj Hadlington

Eureka women challenged to witness

■ EUREKA, SD. The W.M.F. held a mother and daughter tea with Polly VanderVorst as speaker. "She challenged the group that Christ is needed in our lives to see us through good and bad situations and to watch for opportune times to witness," says Irene Kusler. The Rev. Perry Schnabel is pastor.

Commanded to Care

Atlantic Association churches send missionary packages

■ GAITHERSBURG, MD. At the Atlantic Association annual meeting, the W.M.F. contributed many items for kilo packages for Confer-

ence missionaries. Some of the women and youth of Shady Grove Baptist Church packed and addressed these packages for 24 missionaries.

"When thank you notes began arriving, one child was ecstatic over the mac-

aroni and cheese dinner that came in his family's package! Thank you to all the women and young people who contributed to this combined effort," says Mae Dillon, secretary, North Atlantic Association W.M.F.

Calvary holds "Pastor Appreciation" service

■ REGINA, SK. Members and friends of Calvary Baptist Church surprised the Rev. Bruno and Jean Voss at a "Pastor Appreciation" night for them. A special program included the presentation of gift certificates to Pastor and Mrs. Voss.

"This is a first in my 34

years of ministry," said Pastor Voss. —Marilyn Nelitz

Spruce Grove women minister to others

■ SPRUCE GROVE, AB. The C.A.R.E. ministry and the W.O.M.E.N. ministry of Parkland Baptist Church have demonstrated a giving spirit over the year to visit, pray, and share with others in need.

"We have seen many examples of individual and group compassion in providing housekeeping, child care, food, and counseling," reports Marj Hadlington. The Rev. Douglas Bittle is pastor.

Committed to Give

Lorraine youth give hymnals to Philippine church

■ LORRAINE, KS. Eighty-one vacation Bible school students and workers of First Baptist Church gave \$240 for hymnals for a new mission church in the Philippines. —Margaret Wilkens

Youth send Bibles to Russia

■ MCLAUGHLIN, SD. At a special service, the youth of First Baptist and the United Church of McLaughlin were recognized for raising money to send 70 Bibles to Russia. The Rev. Arthur Freitag is pastor. —Virginia Walker

"Renew Our Vision" is theme of missions conference

■ WINNIPEG, MB. "Spiritual Growth through Renewing our Vision" was the theme of the Manitoba Association Missions Conference 1990.

The Rev. James Correnti, pastor, Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA, challenged the congrega-

tion through his message and music. Missionaries Dr. Oryn and Pat Meinerts (Cameroon), Rev. Allan and Karen Effa (Nigeria), and Bill and Lucy Lengfeld (Japan) shared about their work. The Rev. Fred Folkerts, associate director of missions, N.A.B. Conference, spoke of the Conference's endeavour to proclaim the gospel around the world by newer and more effective means.

Other speakers were Florinda Serafin from Brazil, student at N.A.B. College, Edmonton, AB, and Louanne Wiens, short-term missionary to Cameroon, from Esterhazy, SK.

A missions fair was held at Whyte Ridge Baptist Church featuring New Life Ministries, Lake Nutimik Baptist Camp, International Students Ministry, Intertribal Communications, and Cross-over Ministries.

The children heard a story in Pidgin English by Pat and Oryn Meinerts.

An offering of \$12,000 was taken for photo copy machines for Brazil and Nigeria, hymnals, Bibles,

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Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives

and videos for Japan, and an electric keyboard for Saker College in Cameroon. —Maria Rogalski

Central gives for Bibles

■ EDMONTON, AB. Central Baptist Church desig-

nated the June benevolent offering for Bibles for Russia through the Canadian Bible Society. Almost \$6,000 was collected for this effort which purchased 1,200 Bibles. —Kurt Remus

Compelled to Serve

Students minister at Rio Grande City

■ STEAMBOAT ROCK, IA. First Baptist Church once again sent a group to Garcia's Ranch Church in Rio Grande City, TX. Associate Pastor Dan Derman took ten high schoolers and one college student to hold vacation Bible school and present a musical.

"We all grew a lot during our week. It was exciting to see close to 100 children come from the community to hear our message of hope," says Pastor Dan. Twenty-six children responded to the invitation given by Pastor Juan Luna to receive Christ as Savior.

One girl commented, "This mission trip is the most important thing I have ever done." —Verna Luiken

Parkland Church takes part in community Canada Day service

■ SPRUCE GROVE, AB. Pastor Doug Bittle and other church leaders assisted the City of Spruce Grove in organizing a Canada Day Worship Service in the Community Square.

Pastor Bittle spoke on "Which Way, Canada?" "We praise God for this opportunity to witness to our

community," reports Marj Hadlington.

David recognized for outstanding service

■ PORTLAND, OR. Chaplain Fred David received recognition for service as a chaplain to patients at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Portland Division, Oregon.

During this past year, Chaplain David led the way among the staff chaplains in doing pastoral care research on AIDS and published a professional paper, "Pastoral Care of AIDS Patients." Following the publication of his article, many VA Hospital Chaplains requested copies of his paper.

He has been asked to give his paper at several clergy conferences.

Numerous nurses and doctors as well as patients and their families have expressed appreciation for David's pastoral care.

Carrington women note freedom symbols

■ CARRINGTON, ND. The W.M.F. of Calvary Baptist Church held a luncheon for 64 women of the Federated Church. The program, "Symbol of Our Freedom," was written and narrated by Virginia Cook. The Rev. Loren Franchuk is pastor. —Vi Pepple

Central IDT team serves in Quebec

■ EDMONTON, AB. Central Baptist's Intensive Disciple Training (IDT) School recently returned from an outreach to Montreal, Quebec. (Montreal is Canada's second largest city and also the second largest French-speaking city in the world.)

Enroute, the IDT Team visited New Life Ministries, an N.A.B. Conference inner-city work in Winnipeg, MB.

In Montreal, the Team worked with three other churches, distributing literature for the upcoming Billy Graham Crusade and ministering in a local hospital.

Most of the IDT Teams' ministry was conducted with a team from an evangelical Anglican Church. This included ministry in a coffee house which is also a drop-in centre providing clothing and light meals for street people. Much time was spent in prayer and worship in preparation for outreach on Ste. Catherine's Street, a lively thoroughfare in the heart of the city. Here the combined teams sang and preached the Gospel in English and French.

Language barriers were also bridged through the use of drama, mime, and dance.

The trip to Montreal provided an excellent cross-cultural mission experience for these Central IDT school members. Another team was engaged in a five-week outreach trip to mainland China. —Kurt Remus

Family counselor joins church staff

■ TRACY, CA. Larry Underwood has joined the staff at Valley Community Baptist Church as head of Family Ministries, offering family, marriage, and child counseling. Underwood, a member of the Church, holds a master's degree in sacred literature and a master's degree in family, marriage, and child counseling.

"I believe that one of the greatest needs in our society today is the emotional healing of wounds as a result of a variety of attacks by society which bombard our families," says Dearmin. "The Christian Counseling Ministry will be an integral part of the ministry at Valley."

First Baptist Church

Avon, SD,
invites

all former pastors, members, and friends
to our

Centennial celebration
October 12-14, 1990

"Christ in You—Our Hope of Glory"

Contact Rev. Anthony J. Salazar
(605) 286-3656

wedding anniversary

■ Mr. and Mrs. Henry Temple, East Olds (AB) Baptist Church: 50 years.

■ Mr. and Mrs. Harold Kranzler, Grace Baptist Church, Grand Forks, ND: 48 years.

■ Mr. and Mrs. John Stroh, Grace Baptist Church, Grand Forks, ND: 65 years.

■ Mr. and Mrs. Charles Balogh, Grace Baptist Church, Grand Forks, ND: 54 years.

■ Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kranzler, Grace Baptist Church, Grand Forks, ND:

60 years (October 19).

■ Mr. and Mrs. Philip Moser, First Baptist Church, McLaughlin, SD, and Mobridge, SD: 71 years.

■ Mr. and Mrs. Albert (Bertha) Vix, First Baptist Church, Minot, ND: 65 years on June 17.

■ The Rev. and Mrs. Wilhelm (Margarete) Wieschollek, Ridgewood Baptist Church, Brookfield, WI: 50 years on May 12. Pastor Wieschollek has served churches in Germany, Canada, and the USA.

church anniversary

■ WACO, TX. Approximately 300 people celebrated Central Baptist Church's 100 years of service to the Lord on June 23-24.

The theme, "A Foundation for the Future," was carried out with a banquet at Baylor University on Saturday and a worship service, dinner, and afternoon service on Sunday.

Dr. Roy Seibel, former

pastor, spoke on Acts 13:1-4: "We are now 'On the Edge of Tomorrow' looking to the future." The Rev. Ron Miller is pastor. —Gay Luning

Addition: The Reverends Herbert Freeman and Elton Kirstein, former pastors, were also present at the 100th anniversary celebration of Forest Park (IL) Baptist Church (September issue, p. 27).



Music sought for Triennial Conference

"Music is an integral part of any Triennial Conference," says Sandra Lindgren, music committee chair. "We're looking for individuals and groups who are interested in ministering in music (vocal or instrumental) during the Conference."

The 43rd Triennial Conference is to be held at MECCA in Milwaukee, WI, July 30-August 4, 1991. A Musicfest is scheduled for Monday evening, July 29.

Contact your pastor for application forms or Sandra Lindgren, 8045 - 61st Ave., Kenosha, WI 53142 — (414) 694-4641.

news

IBLA DEDICATED IN BUDAPEST

BUDAPEST (EBPS) —

The International Baptist Lay Academy (IBLA) was dedicated here July 1.

The IBLA, established mainly for bivocational pastors and lay leaders from Central and Eastern Europe, will focus on persons with little or no formal theological studies and train them for part-time and volunteer ministries.

Each intensive course will last two weeks, and the curriculum will be repeated every three years. Faculty will be provided by different Baptist Unions and will be volunteer, with IBLA providing room and board. For the first session, 59 students from 9 countries were anticipated, including 10 from the Soviet Union.

HUNGARIAN BAPTISTS COMMEMORATE ANABAPTIST MARTYR'S DEATH

BUDAPEST (EBPS) —Hungarian and Czechoslovakian Baptists marked the 450th anniversary of the death of the Anabaptist leader Andreas Fischer on September 22 and 23. The reformer was an active preacher from 1523 until sentenced to death in 1540 by Ferenc Bebek, captain of Krasnahorka Castle, now located in Czechoslovakia.

The event included lectures on the biblical tradition of baptism, Anabaptists, and the life of Andreas Fischer. Anniversary participants placed a wreath at the unmarked site of the martyr's death.

NEW CUSTOMS REGULATIONS IN ROMANIA

BUCHAREST (EBPS) — As of July 11, customs is being charged on all goods imported privately into Romania. The new ruling has been confirmed by the Romanian embassy in West Germany.

Only goods sent by official organizations such as Red Cross and church aid organizations will be free. The European Baptist Federation and Baptist Response-Europe (EBF-BRE) will be acknowledged as official organizations.

All goods must be declared in advance. A confirmation from EBF-BRE must be given and the place where the goods will be entering Romania must be announced before departure.

Baptists are therefore urged to send their gifts through EBF-BRE/Baptist World Aid in order to ensure safe arrival by the most economical means.

ROMANIAN OFFICIALS ENDORSE RELIGIOUS LIBERTY PRINCIPLES

By Art Toalston

BUCHAREST (EBPS) — Less than a week after some 10,000 club-wielding coal miners crushed anti-government protests in June, two key Romanian officials were assuring a delegation of churchmen that human rights will be protected.

The delegation, encompassing several Baptist leaders, received specific assurances that the Romanian government will guarantee freedom of religion under a new constitution being drafted, reported James E. Wood, Jr., at an American church-state studies institute there.

In separate meetings with the delegation June 19, the minister of justice and minister of religious affairs affirmed the principles of religious liberty, said Wood, who gave a presentation on the subject during each session.

In an interview after his visit to Romania, Wood noted that religious liberty advocates have "a very special opportunity in Eastern Europe . . . to influence the formulation of constitutional provisions to give a much broader basis to freedom of religion than has ever been known in these countries."

For centuries before the rise of communism, Wood noted, Baptists, other Christians, and Jews suffered "from state churches that called upon the state to oppress and persecute those outside the state church. Religious freedom is something these countries have not known in their history."

GALLUP POLL ON AMERICAN RELIGION

COLORADO SPRINGS, USA (EBPS/ABNS) —There is little depth of character in the way Americans understand and practice their religious beliefs, according to George Gallup, head of the Gallup Poll and the Princeton Religion Research Center.

Gallup, addressing a group of evangelical publishers and editors in Colorado Springs recently, said a vast majority of Americans "believe they can be a good Christian or Jew but not go to church or synagogue."

He also noted that a majority are "biblical illiterates... We revere the Bible, but don't read it," he claimed. Gallup said surveys have shown that only half of those claiming to be Christians knew who preached the Sermon on the Mount and that one out of three teenagers

could not identify the significance of Easter.

SCHMALKALDEN HOME DEDICATES TWO NEW BUILDINGS

SCHMALKALDEN, EAST GERMANY (EBPS) — The Baptist home for the mentally handicapped in Schmalkalden recently dedicated two new buildings. Leaders of the institution had planned to build a new house for staff members but were able to build a 150-seat chapel as well.

The home now offers training for residents in handicrafts, as well as some technical training. The institution operates a farm, which provides much of its food, and produce for sale. Eleven people live on the farm, known for its high standards and produce yields. Some 70 mentally handicapped men and women live here.

(This was one of the Baptist World Aid projects for which we solicited funds last year.)

IRISH LAUSANNE COMMITTEE LAUNCHED

MANILA (EBPS) — Irish delegates to the Lausanne 11 assembly in Manila met during the congress and formed a Lausanne Committee for Evangelization in Ireland. The Irish Committee chose a Baptist pastor from the Irish Republic as its chair and a Presbyterian minister as secretary. The 40 committee members are drawn from both parts of the country, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. They represent a wide spectrum of denominational, interdenominational and para-church agencies.

They have set up a task force to plan and promote the second Irish Congress on Evangelism in 1992.

BAPTIST PASTOR SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT IN PERU

LIMA (EBPS/WEF) — Rev. Carlos Garcia, a Baptist pastor who was president of the National Evangelical Council of Peru until mid-April, was elected second vice-president of the country in June elections. He held the number three slot on the ticket of Alberto Fujimori, a practicing Catholic. But the Roman Catholic church openly campaigned against Fujimori's Change 90 party because of its strong support in evangelical circles. One-third of its congressional candidates were either clergy or adherents of evangelical churches.

MORMON RITUAL CHANGES DON'T ALTER THEOLOGY, BAPTIST LEADER WARNS

By Mark Wingfield

ATLANTA (BP) — Recent changes in rituals of the Mormon Church do not change the church's basic theology Tal Davis, a Southern Baptist interfaith witness leader, said.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints still "seriously deviates" from historic Christian doctrine.

Although Mormon church leaders will not discuss temple rituals, reports of changes in the "endowment" ceremony have been published in major daily newspapers, including the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times.

According to published testimonies of Mormons who have participated in the temple ritual since April, at least three major changes have been made: (1) women now pledge to obey God and listen to the advice of their husbands, rather than vowing obedience to their husbands; (2) a dramatization of Christian clergy as hirelings of Satan has been eliminated; and (3) participants are no longer required to make throat-slitting and disembowelment gestures as symbols of what will happen if they reveal the secret ceremony's contents.

The endowment ceremony is one of three major rituals performed in the 43 Mormon temples, which are considered more holy than local meeting places, called wards. Other rituals performed in the temple are celestial marriage and baptism for the dead.

He noted that Mormon theology is still "radically different" from the beliefs of Christian denominations. "They have a different concept of God," Davis said. "They still reject the Trinity and talk about three separate gods. The whole notion of the temple is to prepare them for entering the celestial kingdom in which they believe they, too, can be gods."

Rather than marking a change in theology, the recent ritual revisions indicate that Mormon leaders are concerned about their public perception, Davis said. He explained that films such as "The God Makers" and "Temple of the God Makers" exposed some of the more bizarre elements of Mormon temple rites.

"Mormons are trying hard to gain a more acceptable image, to be accepted into the mainstream Christian community. As these things have come to light, it has been an embarrassment to them.

Changing the rituals is "a stroke of genius," Davis said, because it renders

critical films such as "The God Makers" obsolete.

Yet he questioned the church's willingness to change ceremonial elements said to have been given by revelation from God. "It seems amazing they can change something like this so radically," Davis said. "It's like us pulling a whole book out of the Bible and saying, 'We don't use that anymore.'"

The Mormon Church has a history of changing practices and doctrines that were said to be handed down by divine edict. Two notable examples were the church's move away from polygamy in 1890 and the 1978 decision to allow black males to achieve the Mormon priesthood.

BAPTIST LEADER FLEES LIBERIA REPORTS RANDOM KILLING BY DOE

MCLEAN, VA (BWA) — Warned of his impending death by forces of President Samuel K. Doe, the Executive Secretary of the Liberia Baptist Missionary & Education Convention Inc., Charles Blake, fled Liberia and arrived in the United States July 24.

Blake reported that the President of the Baptist Convention, J.K. Levee Moulton is in hiding.

In a phone call to the Baptist World Alliance on July 27, Blake reported: "They are just killing our people. Whoever they meet they kill." Blake said that religious leaders had especially been targeted by Doe because he believed that they support Taylor.

Blake said that there is also an acute shortage of food and water. Because there has been no rain for three weeks, there is no water and what there is in wells is contaminated because of the dead bodies. "We expect an epidemic at

any time" he said.

Because there is hardly any food to eat, "people are eating things that one wouldn't imagine you could eat for survival," he said.

Blake said that the church was in disarray with people scattered everywhere and many killed. He said that last December when the fighting first started, two Baptist churches in Nimba were burnt and many of the 600 members killed.

Last May, all of the churches including the Muslims met and personally appealed to Doe, and appealed to Taylor through the American embassy. "That worked well," Blake said, but later on, interfaith peace talks in Sierra Leone broke down because Doe refused to step down if Charles Taylor would be the one to run Liberia.

NEPAL'S KING TO FREE RELIGIOUS PRISONERS

KATMANDU, NEPAL (EBPS/BP) — A royal palace statement issued June 12, said all religious prisoners would be released and all charges against people awaiting trial for religious activity would be dropped. The amnesty will free 29 Christians from jails throughout the country. Criminal charges against another 250 Christians will be dropped, according to a government spokesman.

The amnesty will mainly benefit Nepalese Christians arrested for proselytizing, and people who converted to Christianity. Previously both expressions of faith were banned by Nepalese law.

After weeks of pro-democracy demonstrations forced King Birendra to enact sweeping governmental reforms in April, Nepalese Christians lobbied the new interim government for the release of religious prisoners. □

Willimon to speak on Rethinking Worship

Dr. William Willimon, dean of the chapel and professor of Christian ministry at Duke University, Durham, NC, will present lectures on worship at the Consultation on Worship to be held at the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, October 15-17, 1990.

In addition to Willimon's lectures, numerous workshops on worship and worship opportunities will be offered in coordination with the Great Plains Pastors' Conference and Hiller Lectureship.

For more information, contact North American Baptist Seminary, 1321 W. 22nd St., Sioux Falls, SD, 57105; (605) 336-6588.

what's happening

Ministry Changes

■ **Richard Payne**, 1990 graduate of North American Baptist College, Edmonton, AB, summer youth worker Century Meadows Baptist, Camrose, AB. —Ken Gerber

■ **Corey Sateren** to pastor, Mountain View Baptist, Spearfish, SD, Sept. 1, 1990.

■ **Robert Travis** to pastor, First Baptist Church, McLaughlin, SD, September 1.

■ **Lyndon Dojohn** to Hillview Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB, youth pastor, August.

■ **Diane Burwell**, summer preacher, Crowsnest Community Baptist Church, Blairmore, AB, will be serving the church in other needed capacities over the next year.

Chaplains

■ **Chaplain Gary Ostercamp** to Chaplain Pediatrics, University of Missouri Hospital and Clinics, Columbia, MO.

■ **Chaplain Dale Axt** to be promoted to Major in the United States Air Force Reserve effective June 1991.

■ **Chaplain David Rapske**, reassigned to Frankfurt, West Germany, effective June 3 as the Broadcast Chaplain in Europe for AFN. He has two daily programs on radio reaching an audience of

about 650,000 from Scotland to Berlin, and Denmark to Italy. A third program of contemporary Christian music will air Sunday mornings throughout Europe.

New appointment



■ **Dr. Ronald Mayforth** from professor of Pastoral Theology, Edmonton (AB) Baptist Seminary to Director of Area Ministries, North American Baptist Conference, Oakbrook Terrace, IL, effective Jan. 1, 1991. Previously he had served as North Central Area minister and as a pastor.

■ **Scott Pickard**, ordained into the Christian ministry, North Freedom Baptist Church, North Freedom, WI, July 29.

■ **Cindy Shipley**, ordained to the Christian ministry as a hospital chaplain, August 23, by Meadow Hills Baptist Church, Aurora, CO.

Retirement

■ **The Rev. Gordon Thomas** retired as pastor of North Pointe Baptist Church, Warren, MI, effective September 30. He had served at North Pointe for 12 years. He was ordained at First Baptist Church,

Fessenden, ND, April 6, 1961. He has served as pastor at Kittredge Union, CO; First Baptist, Fessenden, ND; North Highlands Baptist, Dallas, TX; Calvary Baptist, Bethlehem, PA.; and North Pointe Baptist, Warren, MI.

New Day Team

■ **New Day** is an appointed group of committed N.A.B. Conference young people who have sought the opportunity to help broaden their ministry vision and abilities, as well as the vision in our Conference churches.

The 1990 New Day team members are John Kiemele, director of Team Ministries, Ashley, ND; Linda Guenther, road director, Cleveland, OH; Ron Bublitz, Richmond, BC; Lyndell Campbell, Yorkton, SK; David Fandrich, Bismarck, ND; Gail Grunwald, Leduc, AB; Jason Hildebrand, Stafford, KS; Aundrea Palmer, Sacramento, CA; Tomas Schaer, assistant to the road director, Elgin, IA; Sandra Strobel, Hope, KS.

The Baptist Home, Inc., and the Baptist Apartments, Inc., Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 16, 1990, at 2 p.m. at the Baptist Home, 1100 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND. This will be their 50th anniversary meeting and celebration.

baptist world aid



Baptist World Aid Assists Earthquake Victims

MCLEAN, VIRGINIA, USA (BWA) —The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) has sent US \$40,000 to aid earthquake victims in the Philippines,

Peru, Costa Rica, and Iran.

Through the Division of Baptist-World Aid, the BWA has sent US \$20,000 for relief work by the Philippine Baptist Community Development Foundation, Inc., a committee of leaders of the five Baptist conventions in the Philippines. The committee coordinates Baptist response in the affected areas and continues to define needs as the program continues.

Philippine Baptists are concentrating their work in Dagupan City and Baguio, which have suffered tremendous damage. People in these regions are still camping in the open because of fear of building collapses during aftershocks. In Baguio, the ground still appears to be sinking.

A series of earth tremors struck Costa Rica and caused considerable damage in the Puriscal area. The Baptist Convention of Costa Rica is helping the homeless, injured, and displaced.

Baptist World Aid, has sent an initial grant of US \$5,000 to Peru and has received an appeal for US \$40,000

more.

The Baptist Convention of Peru continues to assist victims of a June earthquake which occurred in a remote forested area. Baptists have teams working in the area to help those who have lost everything in this disaster.

Funds in Peru are being used to distribute food, medicine, and household goods. Baptist World Aid has sent a grant of US \$5,000.

The Elam Mission, based in London, is the Baptist World Aid channel for delivering help to the earthquake victims in Iran. This mission is working with the Council of Evangelical Churches in Iran to distribute food, medicine, blankets, and other supplies.

As reported earlier, Baptist World Aid sent an initial grant of US \$10,000 immediately after the earthquake.

Your contributions designated for earthquake relief with checks made out to North American Baptist Conference will be sent to help Baptists in these countries. (1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3994.)

Witness Task Force Hears Posterski

On two hot, humid days in Chicago — July 9 and 10 — when the N.A.B. International Office air-conditioning was not working — the Witness Task Force met to make plans for resource materials to launch this imperative: Commissioned to Witness in 1991.

They heard guest resource person, Donald C. Posterski of Canada, describe six obstacles to witnessing. Posterski, the author of the book, **Reinventing Evangelism**, stated that people are open to God in Canada and the U.S.A., but they are not planning to go to church to find God. Their incredible openness to the supernatural and experimental is seen through their interest in the New Age Movement or their attitude: "Let's taste and see." "The challenge for the church in the 1990s is to give meaning to the Gospel," he said.

One obstacle to evangelism is excessive sameness. "It's tough to find a difference between church at-

tenders and nonattenders," noted Posterski.

Another obstacle to evangelism is living in a pluralistic society. He stated that Christians need to learn how to live as a minority in a pluralistic society. "Christians think they are a majority in North America, but through reverse discrimination, Christians are being intimidated and censored. This causes people who want to witness to be silent."

The erosion of authority is another obstacle to evangelism. No one gets respect automatically, so Christians must establish personal rapport with others and earn respect. Youth say, "Relate to me and live so I can respect you. Then you can teach me."

Lifeless theology must be energized by making evangelism life-centered not just cross-centered. Speaking the truth from God's point of view on all matters of life and death and equipping people to send the message that the Gospel

speaks to all of life are keys to overcoming this obstacle.

"We need to empower affectionless worship," continued Posterski. "There is growth in churches in Canada that feed the heart — that sing songs that are an extension of the heart."

Posterski challenged the group to look for 50 churches to do a needs assessment and then create seekers alternatives. "Jesus tuned into people's worlds in order to bring them along the way."

Members of the Task Force are Howard Anderson of North Carrollton Baptist Church in Texas, chair; Paul Thompson, Parma Heights Baptist Church, Ohio; Werner Dietrich, McDermot Avenue Baptist, Winnipeg, MB; Lynn McNaughton, Meadowlark-Westland Baptist, Edmonton, AB; Benno Przybylski, Edmonton Baptist Seminary, Alberta; and John Binder and Lewis Petrie of the Conference International Office. □

opinion

Responding to People with AIDS

by Willis Potratz

How should a congregation respond to AIDS? AIDS is an abbreviation for the disease "Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome." With the worldwide spread of this disease reaching an epidemic level, this is no longer a hypothetical question.

Some congregations have sought to formulate policies which, hopefully, would assist them in a unified response to an "AIDS" infected person and affected family. Other congregations have determined to do what they do all the time. This is to minister to persons with this disease on a person to person basis as they seek to do to all those who are ill in their congregation. The ques-

tion discussed prior to a situation requiring an immediate decision, whatever the determined resolution, will assist in communication and unity.

When the congregation determines how they will respond to an AIDS infected person and family, this gives direction and security to the members. It also is a ministry to the infected. They can reveal their need to a congregation with less fear.

Consideration of the question, "How should a congregation respond to AIDS?", should also lead a congregation to practice good hygiene. Attention needs to be given to providing clean nurseries and rooms, the use of gloves in treating accidents involving blood, etc. It is the responsible thing to do.

To assist our congregations in considering a response to the AIDS question, the Conference Department Directors have formulated a brief guide. This has been distributed with the "Link" publication.

Dr. Wendell Hoffman, Central Plains Clinic Ltd., Sioux Falls, SD 57105, who has specialized in infectious diseases, and is presently treating AIDS patients, has made himself available to assist North American Baptist Conference congregations by providing the latest medical information. His telephone number is (605) 335-2727. □

Dr. Willis Potratz has served as Area Ministries Director, N.A.B. Conference, for the past nine years.

book review

AIDS—Ministry in the Midst of an Epidemic, by Wendell W. Hoffman and Stanley J. Grenz (Baker Books, 304 pp.; \$12.95, paper). Reviewed by Lewis J. Petrie, development director, N.A.B. Conference.


Hoffman, a medical doctor from Sioux Falls, SD, has given a succinct and comprehensive treatment of the issue of AIDS from the medical perspective. Chapter 2: "The Cause of AIDS" cleared up a number of misconceptions concerning how the AIDS virus is transmitted. Also there has been some concern about how long a HIV virus can live outside the human body. Hoffman addresses this issue when he notes:

"Several studies have shown that the virus is capable of living for up to seven to ten days outside of the body. Since the amount of virus used in these studies was approximately 100,000 times that of what would exist in the bloodstream of an AIDS patient, conclusions

regarding HIV's ability to live outside the body must be carefully made" (pp. 69-70).

The section of the book written by Grenz, a former N.A.B. Seminary professor, focuses on the responsibility of the Church in ministering to the needs of the AIDS sufferer. Indeed, the Church is faced with a tremendous challenge as Grenz points out repeatedly. Crisis is an issue that is being faced by the Church in the AIDS epidemic. There are many barriers that need to be overcome in order to meet the crisis presented by the AIDS epidemic.

Any concerned, caring Christian who reads this book will be challenged to face the reality and crisis of AIDS in a way that will bring healing and salvation to those who are in desperate need of both. AIDS sufferers are running out of time. We do not have the right to waste it or avoid using it. □




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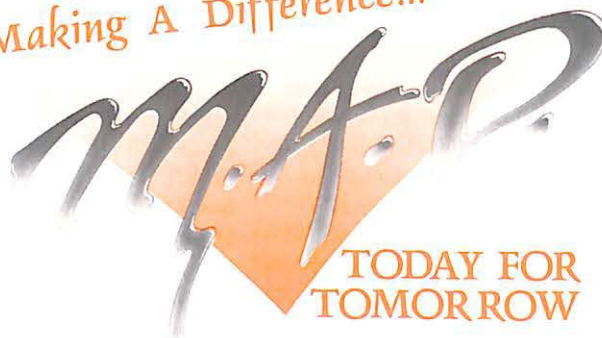


triennial conference



*Dewey Bertolini
to speak*

Making A Difference...



"M.A.D. — Making a Difference . . . Today for Tomorrow" is the theme of the youth program of the Triennial Conference to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 30-August 4, 1991. It is anticipated that 800 to 1,000 youth will meet in downtown Milwaukee at Marquette University approximately one mile from the shores of Lake Michigan. The youth will not only receive their lodging and meals, but also will receive exciting and challenging Biblical insights from well-known youth speaker, Dewey Bertolini. Mr. Bertolini was guest speaker at the Triennial Conference held in Calgary, Alberta, in 1988.

Youth — grades nine through college age — will be challenged in their Christian walk to stand tall and strong, having a righteous anger for the happenings in society that are contrary to the plan God desires for them to have.

The Biblical Imperative for the N.A.B. Conference in 1991 is Commissioned to Witness. In relation to this goal, youth will be offered the opportunity to become involved in a service activity in which they will literally go into the communities of Milwaukee and become servants through outreach programs.

Special events scheduled for this week include praise/worship times each morning with Ron Rogalski, assistant director of music, Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, California; a social and "ice-breaker" time on Tuesday evening following the opening session with the adults, an outing to the Milwaukee County Zoo (the third largest in the country) for a Brat Fest, and a concert Friday evening featuring DEGARMO & KEY. On Saturday evening, the youth will present a program for the adults at MECCA auditorium.

"Start the necessary arrangements to attend these six exciting days in Milwaukee next summer," states Mark Kelm, youth committee chair.

"We are anticipating a refreshing time of renewing friendships, making new friends, as well as gaining practical tools needed in order to 'make a difference . . . today for tomorrow' in our communities." □